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LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

SIR GILBERT ELLIOT.

VOL. I.

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LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

SIR GILBERT ELLIOT

FIRST EARL OF MINTO

FROM

1751 TO 1806,

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WHEN HIS PUBLIC LIFE IN EUROPE WAS CLOSED BY HIS APPOINTMENT TO THE VICE-ROYALTY OF INDIA.

EDITED BY HIS GREAT-NIECE

THE COUNTESS OF MINTO.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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1874.

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PREFACE.

DEAR LORD RUSSELL,—I thank you for allowing me to connect my book with your name. The connection is a natural one, for the book conforms to the advice you gave me four or five years ago; and the hope that you would find some interest in it has been present to me throughout.

I have selected, as you advised, such portions of the first Lord Minto's correspondence as, after elimination of topics purely personal and private, have appeared to contain matter of general interest. Of the voluminous collection preserved in MS. at Minto, comprising public and private, official and domestic correspondence, the letters now published form a small part; but they will, I trust, suffice to present a lively picture of the period at which they were written. Those to and from public men show the carefully-considered opinions of the writers on the political questions of the day; but the family letters appear to me more valuable, as written

without premeditation, and as disclosing day by day the circumstances, the passions, and motives which shaped the opinions and decided the action of statesmen; not omitting those quasi facts, '*the flams*,' which South tells us are transmuted by History into 'lies immortalised!' Upon this portion of the general collection I have therefore drawn most largely.

And now, one word more. I am well aware that on certain public questions, and those the most important discussed in this correspondence, your opinion of the policy pursued by Lord Minto does not coincide with his: but divergence in method does not necessarily exclude agreement in aim and object, nor sympathy of spirit.

In his sense of duty, at once so simple and so strong, in the quiet confidence with which in a gloomy day he lost 'no jot of heart or hope' in his country's cause, in his firm persuasion that treasure and life are never more fitly spent than in the defence of national independence and of individual liberty, in his wide toleration and refined tastes, who should sympathise, if not yourself?

Yours ever affectionately,

NINA MINTO.

December 20, 1873.

LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

SIR GILBERT ELLIOT

FIRST EARL OF MINTO.

CHAPTER I.

GILBERT ELLIOT, first Earl of Minto, whose correspondence is now published, was born in 1751 of a family which had not been without distinguished members for several generations. The Elliots of Minto are an offshoot of an old Border house which in mediæval times gave a chief to the clan of the same name. Whether they descend, as some say, from a native tribe, or, as others say, from a Norman stock, is of small importance. What is historically certain is that in the fifteenth century they were settled in considerable numbers on the Scotch Borders, and that the leading family among them, that of Elliot of Redheugh,[1] was held responsible by the Government for 'good rule' in Liddesdale.

[1] In a MS. tract illustrative of Border topography addressed to Lord Burghley in the reign of Queen Elizabeth and now in the British Museum, it is stated that the chief surnames in Liddesdale, and 'most

Following the fashion of their countrymen when there was small outlet for young men seeking their fortunes, elder and younger sons alike settled themselves on the land, and a considerable district of Upper Teviotdale was at one period in the hands of Elliots, though as far as we know not an acre of it came to them by royal grant or favour. Like many other Border families they have lost whatever family documents they may once have possessed. Such as they had were burnt in a fire at Stobs Castle last century; and in consequence while State-papers, ballads, and traditions bear witness to the prominent part they bore in local history, the notices remaining to us of their private affairs are, until the seventeenth century, few and scanty.

Throughout the seventeenth century the Elliots of Stobs, descendants of Redheugh, to whom passed the chieftainship, a mere nominal honour, on the failure of the elder branch without male issue, were the leading family of the name in Roxburghshire, and in the founder of their line the houses of Minto and of Heathfield find a common ancestor.

Gilbert Elliot of Stobs, son of William Elliot of Lari-

offensive to England,' stand upon Elliots and Armstrongs, also that the chief Elliot is at Ladiesfane, *Lariston*. But this was a mistake, owing probably to the fact that Elliot of Redheugh was at the time a minor, his uncle, William Elliot of Larriston, acting as tutor during the minority of the head of the house. During the sixteenth century the name of Elliot of Redheugh appears frequently on historical documents as that of the chief of the clan. Robert Elliot, last male heir of Redheugh, married Lady Frances Stewart, daughter of Francis Stewart, Earl of Bothwell, by Margaret Douglas, widow of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, daughter of David, seventh Earl of Angus, and niece of Regent Morton.

ston and Mary Scott of Buccleuch,[1] was born at the latter end of the sixteenth century. When he grew to manhood the Borders were passing through their darkest day. The old bonds which had kept society together were rapidly dissolving, the great nobles had been drawn away in the vortex of the Court, and internecine feuds had taken the place of a national cause. Among the most active participators in these local squabbles was Walter Scott of Harden,[2] whose daughter Margaret became the wife of Gilbert Elliot of Stobs, and the lawless state of the country may be gathered from the tradition that the bride's portion consisted of 'half a Michaelmas moon;'—in other words, of half the produce of some marauding expedition, carried on when the 'stooks' were safely garnered, under the light of a September moon; conditions doubtless suggestive of Falstaff's 'minions of the moon,' but nevertheless such as had invariably characterised Border warfare, whether made by king, warden, or clans, as may be seen in the correspondence of the great warden, Lord Dacre, with Henry VIII., where he makes threat of executing all manner of evil on the Scots *next light*—'God wylling!'[3]

[1] Mary Scott, daughter of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, by Lady Margaret Douglas. Her husband is said on account of this connection to have been the only man not of the name of Scott who accompanied Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch on his famous expedition to release Kinmont Willy from Carlisle gaol.

[2] Ancestor of Lord Polwarth.

[3] The traditional portion bestowed on Margaret Scott is rendered more probable by the circumstances which attended her brother's wedding, when not only the portion but the bride herself was a prize, or rather a penalty of war. According to the story commonly told, the young laird of Harden was taken prisoner while engaged in a foray on

It is stated that of the guests assembled to witness the wedding not one could write his name; while those names, though among the best of the Border, were far less familiar to friends and neighbours than certain sobriquets founded on individual qualities or peculiarities.

Gilbert Elliot was known in the district as 'Gibbie wi' the gowden garters;' and Margaret his bride has come down to us as 'Maggie Fendy,' (*anglicè* handy,) though no tradition exists to tell us on what occasions the laird of the green hills of Stobs displayed his golden decorations, or to what peculiar dexterity of finger was due the name bestowed on his wife; but that of her father, 'auld Wat,' of her mother, the 'Flower of Yarrow,' and of her sister-in-law, 'Muckle-mou'd Meg,' are intelligible enough, and have lingered in the memory of the country-side, preserving for them with posterity something of the rough but kindly familiarity with which their contemporaries regarded them.

Such having been the state of society on the Borders in the beginning of the seventeenth century, the rapidity is noteworthy with which these wild untutored spirits became converted from petty chieftains into leaders of a national cause no less sagacious than bold.

the lands of Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank, and was about to suffer death at the hands of his captor, when the Lady Murray appeared upon the scene. Addressing her husband in a spirit of compassion finely blended with maternal instincts, 'Hout, Sir Gideon!' cried she; 'wad ye take the life of the winsome young laird Harden pf, when ye hae three ill-faur'd lassies to marry?' 'Right,' said her candid lord; 'he shall marry our muckle-mou'd Meg, or streck for it.' Between the gallows and the lady the prisoner's hesitation was but slight. So he carried home to Harden a bride instead of her father's 'kye,' and the marriage turned out a happy one.

To Gilbert Elliot and Margaret Scott were born six sons; all of whom, whether less illiterate than their 'forbears' we cannot say, were men of action.

The elder sons can hardly have emerged from boyhood when the first act opened of the Civil war, and the army of Leslie marched to the Border (1638). Yet in 1641 William, eldest son of Stobs, sat in the Great Parliament as commissioner for Roxburghshire. In the years following, when forces were raised by Parliament for putting the kingdom into a position of defence, he and his brother Gilbert were nominated among the colonels of horse and foot for the county of Roxburghshire. Four sons of Stobs served on the committees of war for the counties of Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire. At a later period, when the growing strength of the Independents alarmed and offended the more moderate Presbyterians, leading many of them, as is well known, to favour the Royalist cause, among those who disliked to be 'violently subjected' by fanatics no less than by Princes, were Gavin Elliot, third son of Stobs, and his nephew Gilbert, son of the eldest brother, William.[1]

The younger man was knighted on the field of Largo Sands by Charles II. in 1651, and created a baronet in 1666; and the sufferings of Gavin Elliot in the Royalist cause (in 1645 and 1646) were assigned as reasons in after years for the rescinding of an Act of Forfeiture subsequently incurred by his son Gilbert Elliot, the first baronet of Minto.

[1] William Elliot of Stobs, eldest son of Gibbie wi' the gowden garters, married a daughter of Lord Cranstoun of Crailing; chief of an old Border family that bore the significant motto: 'Thou shalt want ere I want.'

Thus in the second generation from 'Gibbie with the gowden garters,' whose bride's portion was half a Michaelmas moon, two of his descendants had achieved hereditary honours.

Gilbert Elliot of Minto was the first of his name who betook himself to the Law as a profession. That he did so with the true Border energy, may be presumed from the fact of his having risen to its highest honours. His portrait at Minto gives the idea of a vigorous character; the strongly-marked features, the bold open eye, and long upper lip bear a stamp of determination that might have become the leader of a foray as well as the Lord President of the Judges' Bench; and in the course of his career he found more frequent occasion for the exercise of qualities such as had been exhibited by his forefathers, than a lawyer's life is apt to furnish.

Born in 1651, his youth was passed under the worst Government that ever ruled in Scotland, and the persecutions and oppressions suffered by his countrymen and kindred made a profound impression on a mind already strongly imbued with Presbyterian sympathies. At the Restoration, two of his uncles of the Stobs family had been subjected to heavy fines and forfeitures, under pain of exclusion from the Act of Indemnity; but after the attempt, no less foolish than wicked, to establish Prelacy by the Act of 1662, the whole of his connection, male and female, seem warmly to have taken up the cause of the Nonconformists. Then again the harvest moon shone on armed bands travelling as unweariedly among the Border glens and hills to hear the

Gospel from their fugitive preachers, as in former days they had ridden to chase an enemy or carry off the prey. Those who were forbidden to meet in temples made with hands, assembled on the hill-tops, while the glittering squadrons of Dalhousie and Airlie watched them from the vale below.[1]

Nor did the Border gentry refuse the shelter of their roof to the recalcitrant ministers, though to 'harbour' them was to provoke fire and persecution. The 'Lady Stobs' and the 'Lady Craigend,'[2] both of whom were fined more than once for their contumacy in not attending church, are mentioned with special approbation by the 'famous worthy, Dr. John Livingstone,' as 'well-affected persons' by whom he had 'oft been well refreshed at exercises in their house.' With the 'Lady Stobs,' whilom 'Maggie Fendy,' her grandson Gilbert is said to have passed much of his childhood; and under

[1] 'On a time Mr. John Welsh was preaching in our country, on a week-day. There were several of us convoyed him into Teviotdale, where we were to hear sermon on Sabbath after, at a hill called Ruberslaw, when we were beset by the enemy in time of sermon, there coming a company of horse and a company of foot, commanded by the Earls of Dalhousie and Airlie, who surrounded the mount, and sent us word to dismiss, or they would fall upon us. We told them we were met for the worship of God in the fields, being deprived of the kirks, and we would dismiss when sermon was over and not till then. So they went about the hill and viewed us, and seeing us very numerous and also well armed, they left us. There were several meetings of the Lord's people up and down the country attacked after this manner, and several times prisoners taken and carried to Edinburgh.'—*Memoirs of George Brysson.*

[2] Wife of Gilbert Elliot of Craigend, second son of Stobs. At times when a whole district was peopled by families bearing the same surname, it was customary to distinguish them by the name of their respective properties.

her roof he probably first became acquainted with one whose fortunes had no small influence on his own.

William Veitch, in after times a highly esteemed minister of the Church, resided, in 1660, as tutor in a family of Roxburghshire connected by marriage with the Elliots, and, in company with his friend Dr. John Livingstone, was doubtless often a welcome guest at Stobs. In something less than twenty years from that time, Gibbie Elliot was settled as a writer in Edinburgh, and Veitch, who had cast in his lot with the 'wild western Whigs,' had become of sufficient importance to give umbrage to the Government.

Obliged after the battle of the Pentland Hills to fly from Scotland, he had taken refuge in Northumberland, where he occupied himself in preaching to the dalesmen on both sides of the Border.' By his means "the ark, removed from Shiloh Ephratah, the ingrounds, the places of greater outward plenty and pleasure, was to be found in the borders of the mountains and fields of the woods.'[1] In the midst of these ministrations, Veitch was arrested by an act of arbitrary power, was carried to Edinburgh, and sent by the Council before the Criminal Court on an old sentence obtained in his absence some twelve years before. The proceedings against him being of a nature to preclude all hope of justice from the King's Government in Scotland, he was advised to send a representation of his case to London, and he selected as the agent to conduct it, the son of his old friends, the young writer, Gilbert Elliot.

[1] McCrie's *Life of the Rev. William Veitch.*

Elliot accordingly went up to London, where he was successful in enlisting on behalf of his client the ardent support and co-operation of Shaftesbury, Monmouth,[1] and other leaders of the Whig party, by whom an amount of pressure was brought to bear on the Government, under which, though not at once, its obduracy gave way. A royal order desiring that all further proceedings against Veitch should be stopped, was sent through Lord Stair to Gilbert Elliot. To this consummation the courage and ability of the young agent had materially contributed, and the notice thus drawn to him of the leaders of the Presbyterian Party in Scotland and of the principal Whigs in England, laid the foundation of his future fortunes. Not long after the satisfactory conclusion of these proceedings, Elliot had a share in the escape from prison and death of a more important person, the Earl of Argyle, who, lying in Edinburgh Castle under a false charge of treason, had good reason to believe that his life was aimed at by the Privy Council. To discover how far their designs were sanctioned by the king, he resolved to send an agent to London, and Gilbert Elliot having had recent experience of political parties there, was selected as a fit and proper person to be entrusted with the mission. No opportunity was, however, allowed him on this second embassy to display any higher qualities than activity and zeal. He can hardly have arrived in London when he learnt that a king's

[1] Borderers had a peculiar claim on the good will of Monmouth, as he had recently married the heiress of the Buccleuchs.

messenger had been already despatched to the Council in Edinburgh, bearing orders for sentence to be passed on Argyle, but staying execution during pleasure. There was no time to lose, and none was lost. Elliot started forthwith on his return journey, outrode the king's messenger by near twenty-four hours, and at four in the evening of December 20th, delivered his letters to Argyle, announcing that the sentence of death would be immediately pronounced. In less than an hour the bird had flown. In the disguise of a page, Argyle passed through the gates of Edinburgh Castle, and by the time the Council were reading the king's letter, their captive was over the Border in Veitch's house in Northumberland, whence both fugitives made their way to London without discovery. Both peer and preacher owed their liberty, if not their lives, to Gilbert Elliot, and from that time he became an active participant in the schemes under deliberation, for delivering Scotland from the intolerable tyranny of the Stuarts.

Persecutions and proscriptions had, however, widely scattered those whose desires and objects were in unison; their joint operations had to be concerted in Scotland, England, and Holland; and Mr. Elliot, trusted by all, and able as any, was largely employed as the medium of communication between the heads of the party.[1] The

[1] 'On the death of Charles II. several Scottish gentlemen,' says a Scotch historian, 'who had been banished or forced to withdraw to Holland by the severities of the time, met in Rotterdam to consult concerning the state of their native country, and their own duty in that critical juncture of affairs. After a free communication of sentiments, they came to the conclusion that considering the natural temper and

discovery of the Rye-House Plot in England led to further persecutions in Scotland: from these Elliot took refuge in Holland, whither he had already made several journeys, and when we next hear of him he was going the round of the churches of Geneva and Germany collecting contributions for a rising in Scotland. In 1685 he was one of the twelve Scotch gentlemen who met at Rotterdam to consider their duty in that critical state of affairs, and having 'assumed and taken upon them the character of a council,' determined upon 'a great undertaking in defence and for the recovery of the religious rights and liberties of the people of Scotland,' resolving to make war against James, Duke of Albany and York. When Argyle [1] sailed for the Highlands on his ill-fated expedition, Gilbert Elliot was one of those who accompanied him on board the 'Admiral ship,' and after the failure of the undertaking and the captivity and death of its leader, he, among the other principal

past base conduct of the Duke of York, and the principles of the religion to which he was devoted, his succession to the imperial crown of the three kingdoms threatened their religion and liberties with the most imminent danger, and that the behaviour of the Parliament for a course of years, with the means used to pack and manage them, and the ease with which he could raise a numerous army among the barbarous and bigoted nations of Ireland, would render it easy for him to carry on his terrible work of settling and rivetting papacy and slavery in, and eradicating Christianity and liberty (the chief blessings of a country) out of these nations; at least would make the means of preventing these great and imminent dangers more narrow and scarce, and the practice more difficult and dangerous.' Being arrived at this conclusion, it followed that 'as Christians and natives of Scotland they were bound to endeavour the rescue of the religion, rights, and liberties of their countrymen.'

[1] The Earl of Argyle was nominated general of the army.

adherents of Argyle, was sentenced to death and forfeiture. By what means or in what direction he escaped from Scotland has never been disclosed. It is believed that he wandered for some months as a fugitive among the Border hills, whence he succeeded in reaching the sea-coast, and ultimately in escaping to Holland. It is well known that even to recent times the dwellers among the fells of England and the neighbouring hills of Scotland kept to themselves the secret of certain passes by moor and moss, which facilitated the transit of much unlawful traffic; it is probable that a member of the clan whose strongholds had guarded the water-courses of those same wild districts was not without some friendly hand to point out the path of safety. However this may have been, Elliot succeeded in rejoining in Holland his late companions in arms, with whom he took part in forming 'a sort of Privy Council to the Prince of Orange.' 'Among these,' says Mr. Burton in his 'History of Scotland,' vol. vii. p. 563, 'were Patrick Hume of Polwarth, Gilbert Elliot of Minto, afterwards one of King William's judges, Sir James Stewart who served him as lord-advocate, Baillie of Jerviswoode the son of the martyr, Robert Carstairs, who afterwards ruled the Church of Scotland, and Gilbert Burnet, the most conspicuous of all, but not the most valuable as a sage and secret counsellor.'

Towards the end of his reign, James II. endeavoured by a milder policy to regain the lost affections of Scotland. In 1687 Elliot, among others, obtained a remission of his forfeiture, especially stated to be granted in

consideration of his father's sufferings in the royalist cause during the reign of Charles I. He thereupon returned to Edinburgh, and was soon after, though not without difficulty, admitted to the Bar. In the following year, 1688, the Revolution brought his friends into power, and he was at once appointed Clerk of the Privy Council, an office which he continued to hold until he was raised to the Bench.

In 1690 his forfeiture was rescinded by a special Act of Parliament; two years later he was created a knight; in 1700 a baronet. In 1703 he was elected to Parliament for Roxburghshire, in which county he had acquired with other lands the Barony of Minto. At the Bar he soon rose into extensive practice, and in 1705 he was raised to the Bench, taking his seat in the Court of Session by the title of Lord Minto.[1] 'A promotion,' says Woodrow, 'well deserved by his unshaken probity, integrity, and boldness against all unrighteousness and vice.'

Such was the prosperous issue of the stirring career which took its rise from the rescue of Veitch; of which Veitch reminded him in after years, playfully saying, that 'had it not been for him, the worthy judge might have been copying papers at a plack a page;' to whom his friend rejoined with at least equal point, 'that had it not been for him, the birds would long since have pecked another skull on the Nether Bow Port.

He retained his seat in Parliament until the Scottish

[1] As Lord President of the Court of Session, he presided in the very Court which had sentenced him to death and forfeiture.

Parliament itself became extinct, steadily supporting the settlement of the Crown on the Hanoverian line, but opposing the abolition of a national legislature. With the Union his political life closed, but he is described as having shown vigour and ability as a Judge in the Court of Session, and as a Lord Justiciary until his death, which occurred in 1718. 'True, honest, just, and bold, of which he had given good proof,' was the character given of him by Patrick Hume, Lord Marchmont.

Nevertheless 'Gibbie Elliot,' as he was popularly called, did not escape the animadversions of those less successful, if not less deserving, than himself. 'How cross to the public appetite is the honeycomb which another man eats,' says an old writer; and in a very poor country this feeling may be stronger than elsewhere. The rapid promotion, and the considerable emoluments enjoyed by him as Clerk of the Privy Council, and a successful advocate, seem to have been viewed with some disapprobation, if we may judge from a passage in a sermon believed to have been preached in Minto Church not long after the Revolution. The subject of the discourse was thankfulness to God for His mercies, and the peroration concluded as follows:—'My friens, be thankfu' that Sabbath is upon the day that it 's on; for, had it been a Tysday,[1] ye wad hae been at Jeddart; or, if a Fursday,[2] ye wad hae been at Hawick; and, if a Friday, it wad hae been my leddy's bucking wash. My friens, be thankfu' that ye are

[1] Tysday—Tuesday, market-day at Jedburgh.
[2] Fursday—Thursday, market-day at Hawick.

no crown pieces, for if ye had, ye wad a' hae been tossed into Gibbie Elliot's bonnet.' If 'Gibbie' was present, he too may have found cause for special thanksgiving in the reflection that, at all events, he had escaped a blessing—such as about the same time was delivered in the pulpit of the Tron Church of Edinburgh: 'God bless all fools and idiots, and particularly the Town Council and Magistrates of Edinburgh.'[1]

Another anecdote, scarcely less characteristic of the time, is told in connection with one of Lord Minto's judicial appearances in the country. It is related that on a certain occasion, when he was presiding as Judge at Jedburgh, a valuable and favourite horse was stolen from his stable. In all probability its merits had become known when he made his public entry into the royal burgh on its back.

To rob a judge at all is a sin next in the calendar to robbing a church, but to rob him when he is sitting on the Bench is only to be equalled by picking the pocket of Justice when her bandage is on her eyes—a most audacious and irreverent outrage, to award a penalty for which might puzzle any man.

But our Judge came of the native stock, and had not then to learn that, from the time of Froissart downwards, Borderers had been remarkable for their appreciation of horseflesh, leading on occasion to peculiar methods in horse-dealing. He knew no less well that reverence for institution, office, or individual is a

[1] I am indebted for this anecdote to my friend and neighbour, Walter Riddell-Carre, Esq.

sentiment closely connected with the existence of high-roads, of which, at the end of the seventeenth century, there were few or none among the mosses and hills of the Borders, where lived in full security of the Sheriff's Court the descendants of those described by the Border Poet as

> able men
> Somewhat unruly, and very hard to tame;
> I would have none think that I call them thieves,
> For if I did it would be arrant lees.[1]

And he knew best of all, possibly by his own feelings, that among the dalesmen of the hills from Cheviot to Skelf Hill, there lingered along with other reminiscences of wilder days, a certain bond of brotherhood, arising in a sentiment for clanship and kinsmanship and auld lang syne.

So raising neither hue nor cry, he wrote a friendly appeal for help to one of 'the name' down in Liddesdale, and did this with such good effect that his correspondent (said to have lived at Unthank, where the lights still flit through a ruined chapel when an Elliot is near to die), not only undertook to prosecute the enquiry in his neighbourhood, but to forward it to the Cumbrian frontier, resort of wilder spirits still. For this end he despatched thereto a messenger on horseback. Alas! next day the man returned—*on foot!* Way-weary and crestfallen he seemed, but his adventures the story does not tell, for before he could enter upon them, sounds of hoofs were heard approaching; and lo! two horses

[1] See a rhyming chronicle of the history of the families of Scott and Elliot, by Captain Walter Scott of Satchells, published 1688.

were seen amicably trotting down the road, their tails fast tied together, the leader making with all speed for the familiar stable, to which he conducted in triumph the Judge's missing steed.

Gilbert Elliot was twice married—first to Helen Stevenson, daughter of a burgess of Edinburgh, by whom he had a daughter married to Sir James Elphinstone of Logie; secondly, to Jean Carre, daughter of Sir Andrew Carre of Cavers, and niece by marriage of his old friend and fellow-exile Patrick Hume, Lord Marchmont.[1] By Jean Carre, who lived to an advanced age and is said to have been a very clever woman, Lord Minto had an only son, by whom he was succeeded in the baronetcy of Minto.

The second Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto was one of those men who, standing high in the estimation of their contemporaries, leave only a traditional reputation to posterity. His name is not associated, like that of his father, with organic constitutional changes, nor, like that of his son, with a brilliant parliamentary career. No published writings of his exist to demonstrate his claim to intellectual power; no private correspondence has been preserved, from whence we can gather knowledge of his affections and sympathies; but his abilities are attested by the fact of his having attained the highest honour of the profession to which he was bred—the Scotch Bar,

[1] Lord Marchmont married Grisell Carre, sister of Sir A. Carre, and by her had numerous children, one of whom, Lady Grisell Baillie, bore a conspicuous part in her father's adventures.

and evidence of his tastes and accomplishments is to be found in various contemporary records and in family traditions. On becoming a judge he, like his father, assumed the title of Lord Minto, which he bore for forty years. He also attained the dignities of Lord Justice Clerk and Lord President of the Court of Session.

If the career of the father marks an advancement of learning in the family, that of the son denotes the attainment of a farther stage in intellectual progress.

'Learning,' as our forefathers were wont to call the more solid acquisitions of the mind, is a plant which bears fruit; it repays in more ways than one the efforts made to obtain it: but the lighter mental graces, such as display themselves in a sympathetic appreciation of the fine arts and a familiar acquaintance with polite literature, *les belles lettres* of foreign countries, are the flowers of mental cultivation, sought by those who desire from them enjoyment rather than remuneration. It is noteworthy that, in the first half of last century, the period of the Justice Clerk's career, when Scotland was far behind England and France in acquaintance with the refinements of life, when the manners of the gentry were primitive to a degree of rudeness, there existed among them a very high standard of intellectual excellence, and, what is perhaps most remarkable, the ornamental parts of mental cultivation were thoroughly studied.

In the judgment of his contemporaries, the second Lord Minto was pre-eminently an accomplished man. A distinguished scholar, the intimate friend and associate in his literary pursuits of his fellow-judge, Lord

Kaimes, he was remarkable for his knowledge and love of foreign as of native literature. In the great writers of Italy he especially delighted, and it is said that he himself composed with grace and facility in their soft and rhythmical tongue. To a cognate taste it may be ascribed that he was held conspicuous for his musical gifts, in days when, according to Smollett,[1] every man in Edinburgh was a musician. But the attractive pursuits of his leisure and the stern calls of his profession were alike unable to diminish the strong 'patriotic enthusiasm' with which he strenuously supported every measure that tended to the improvement of his country. To the preceding generation Scotland owed a new political condition based on organic changes, to the one which followed fell the duty of developing her institutions and natural resources.

Holding with his forefathers that civil and spiritual liberty go together, he was second to none 'in his zealous and useful exertions as a friend of the Protestant cause.' To the measures of the Duke of Argyle, whom he counted among his personal friends, he gave his active support; and, once at least in his life, his well-known principles as a staunch Whig placed him in a position of personal danger, of a kind more familiar to earlier than to recent times. When, 'in the 45,' Prince Charlie took his way from Edinburgh to Carlisle through Teviotdale and Liddesdale, a party of his followers suddenly appeared in the neighbourhood of Minto

[1] Humphrey Clinker.

—so suddenly that the judge had barely received warning of their approach when they arrived before the house. Happily his daughter Jean was equal to the occasion; receiving the unwelcome guests with courteous hospitality, she detained them within the house while her father found time to reach the refuge of some neighbouring craigs. There, 'where falcons hang their giddy nest,[1] he lay concealed among boulders, ivy and brushwood, within hearing of the voices of the troopers who waited for their leaders at the lodge below the hill, nor left his lair till he had seen the reunion of the party, the dismissal of the terrified shepherd's boy who had held their horses, and themselves making at rapid pace for the ford over Teviot and the road to the Border Hills.

Possibly, and not improbably, he may, while thus gazing on the wide landscape below him, have moralised on the fate which was driving the last Stuart from the land of his ancestors. Far as the eye can reach he may have looked from the hills of Liddesdale, cradle of his race, a district given over by James IV. to be harried by Henry VIII., to far Dunse Law, where his kindred had stood in battle-array to withstand Prince Charlie's grandfather; and not a feature of that wide view, diversified with hill, and craig, and glen, and stream, all more or less associated with the history of the land, could recall to him one noble exploit, one royal deed, to be laid to the account of those, termed in

[1] See *Lay of the Last Minstrel.* Canto i.

On Minto craigs the moonbeams glint, &c.

derision by their Border subjects of yore, 'Kings of Fife and the Lothians.'

In after years the Justice-Clerk was wont to say that he owed his life to his daughter's presence of mind; for such was the exasperation of the Jacobites against him that it would not have been safe had he fallen into their hands.

The shelter afforded him on this occasion should have taught the judge some respect for the natural fastnesses, the desolate places of his native land; but he was a scientific agriculturist, one of the earliest of the unrelenting class who robbed Scotland of her natural tartan, her green mosses and her purple heather, to make sheep-walks of her muirlands and cornfields of her broomy braes. Parochial registers record various improvements in the county of Roxburgh inaugurated by him, and also the public spirit he showed in undertaking to make, at his own expense, the roads which traversed his property, thereby giving an impetus to road-making throughout the country. In Edinburgh both he and his son were on a Committee of Taste for the improvement of the town; but it was at Minto that he best loved to dwell, leading the walk along the glen and adorning its 'devious way' with what are now noble forest trees. Conspicuous among them are the rough and rich red boles of some veteran larch, sprung from seeds enclosed in a letter to the Justice-Clerk by John Duke of Argyle. Carefully housed for some time under glass, they were at last emancipated by the intervention of a Sardinian envoy, who, when on a visit to Minto, expressed his

unbounded astonishment at finding the Alpine tree forced to adopt a *modus vivendi* so uncongenial to its habits.

Between the grounds and the library of Minto their owner divided his leisure, surrounded by friends, among whom were some of the most distinguished of his countrymen, and by a family who held him in the highest reverence and respect. Though a kind, he is said to have been a strict father, whose patience was sorely tried by any manifestations of a captious or self-indulgent spirit in his children. One of his sons, Andrew, afterwards Governor of New York, used to describe in his old age the impression made on his boyhood by the awful severity of his father's countenance on overhearing him object at dinner to eat of a leg of boiled mutton; and the impression was doubtless enhanced, when, turning with magisterial dignity to the servant who stood behind him, the Judge thus spoke: 'Let Mr. Andrew have boiled mutton for *breakfast*, and boiled mutton for *dinner*, and boiled mutton for *supper* till he has learnt to like it.'

Strange to say he did learn to like it, or at least he said so to his children.

Lord Minto left a large family by his wife Helen. daughter of Sir Robert Stewart of Allanbank; four of these made themselves a name among their contemporaries. To the eldest, Gilbert, we come presently: his next brother, Andrew, was the last governor of New York; the younger one, John, bore a high reputation as a brave and gallant sailor. Both were men of the same

type, 'true, honest, bold,' and vigorous in the execution of their duties, as was shown by John in many a well-known action in his naval career,[1] and in a remarkable degree by Andrew, when he seized a large quantity of arms possessed by the disaffected in New York and sent them off to General Gage, regardless of 'some very shocking and threatening letters upon the occasion: behaving with so much spirit that the whole respectable people of New York and the country round waited upon him in great bodies to testify their approbation and promise him support, attending him to the place where he was to do his duty and conducting him home in triumph.'[2]

It is said that in both brothers were united warm and benevolent feelings, with a certain uncompromising cast of character often associated with a conscientious though somewhat narrow Presbyterianism. No amount of dutiful attention could ever induce the ex-governor to forgive a nephew who had sympathised in the views of Burke and Fox on the American War; no promptings of family pride could induce him to lend an ear, when that nephew's parliamentary distinction formed the subject of conversation: while the younger man in his most brilliant days did not entirely lose his awe of the 'dour' old uncles living in retirement on Teviotside, who were not to be diverted or cajoled from

[1] The capture by Commodore, afterwards Admiral, Elliot of a privateering squadron under Thurot, was considered at the time to be a very brilliant exploit; and it had important results, inasmuch as it saved the town of Belfast from imminent destruction.

[2] Family correspondence.

their early prepossessions by the influence of great names and brilliant examples. On the cover of a letter addressed to his wife, which enclosed one from Burke more than commonly hyperbolical in its approbation of a great oratorical effort, we find these words: 'Do not let my uncles see it, as they might find a little ridicule in it.'

With these two lived frequently their eldest sister Jean, who shared in a larger degree than they in the intellectual tastes and accomplishments of her father. Endowed with qualities of mind and character such as attract confidence in youth and reverence in age, she had no small influence in the family circle — an influence increased by a natural gift of 'persuasive eloquence,' varied on due occasion with the terse incisive speech that gave to the silver tongue a point of steel, and indubitably proved her descent from the old Border race.[1] Like her father she was a great reader, and to considerable knowledge of the classic authors of England and France she added an intimate familiarity with the poetical legends of the Borders, among whose minstrels she herself has taken a high place by her well-known ballad of the 'Flowers of the Forest,' the most graceful and the most pathetic of all the wails that Flodden has wrung from Scottish hearts.[2]

[1] Lesley says that the Borderers of Queen Mary's days were gifted with 'persuasive eloquence and smooth insinuating words;' and many a protest from offended England attests the sharpness of the *tongue-thrusts* with which they pricked the dignitaries of the period.

[2] A lady, still living, informs us that she remembers having been taken in early childhood to visit Miss Jean Elliot, accepted among her friends and in her native district as one of the 'illustrations de son

But the gifts and accomplishments of Jean Elliot were far surpassed by those of her eldest brother, who succeeded his father in his hereditary rank as the third Baronet of that name, and though perhaps the most able of his race, was the only one in the succession of the family for four generations who attained no higher title than that to which he was born.

To describe the public career of Gilbert Elliot, the third Baronet of Minto, would be to narrate the parliamentary history of twenty years. To the elucidation of this period his MS. journals have indeed already contributed, used as they have been by Sir Denis le Marchant in his editorial notes to Horace Walpole's Memoirs of George III. In the short space allotted to us such an attempt could not be undertaken with any justice to the political reputation of Sir Gilbert; but a rapid review of the chief events of his life will form an almost needful link between the professional careers of the two first Lords Minto, and the political one of his son and successor, the first peer of the same title.

Having received the education common among the Scotch gentry of his country and period, beginning with the Dalkeith Grammar School, and passing thence to the

temps.' She saw a tall stately old lady, conversing with a certain quiet dignity, but 'unluckily,' she says, 'my recollections of her are very imperfect, for my attention was soon diverted by an embroidered peacock on a screen.' Alas! who has ever searched the memories of the past or striven to give a definite shape to the vague dim phantoms of early recollections, without being made to bewail the intrusion of some 'embroidered peacock' which distracted his mental gaze from more worthy objects and left its own contemptible image stamped for ever on his brain?

College of Edinburgh and the University of Leyden, he entered life with a well-stored mind and soon acquired a reputation for sense, information, and for intellectual tastes, such as rapidly introduced him to the most eminent of his contemporaries. He evinced no taste for the legal profession, though he was called to the Scotch Bar, and duly provided himself for his appearance there 'with a huge cocked hat, Parliament-house gown, and a bob wig of a very formal cut.' Writing to a friend[1] from Edinburgh in 1742, soon after his return from the Continent, and after a short visit to London, he says: 'Nature never meant me for a lawyer. I have neither the sort of parts, memory, nor application. Yet I am not discouraged. The same powerful habit that makes men tumblers and rope-dancers may very possibly mould me into a lawyer.' Something may be seen in these words of the earnest resolution which was a marked feature of his character and would probably have secured his success had circumstances obliged him to follow up a profession that had no attraction for him; and something too of the conceit of youth peeps out in other portions of the same letter where he remarks of the society in which he came to reside: 'I love the town tolerably well; there is one fine street, and the houses extremely high. The gentry are a very sensible set of people, and some in their youth seem to have known the world'—the writer was twenty years of age—'but by being too long in a place, their notions are contracted

[1] Mr. Mure of Caldwell, among whose papers this letter finds place. *Caldwell Papers*, printed by the Maitland Club.

and their faces are become solemn. The Faculty of Advocates is a very learned, a very worthy body. The ladies are unexceptionable, innocent, beautiful, and of an easy conversation. The staple vices of the place are censoriousness and hypocrisy. . . . There is here no allowance for levity, none for dissipation. I do not find here that unconstrained, noble way of thinking and talking which one every day meets with among young fellows of plentiful fortunes and good spirits who are constantly moving in a more enlarged circle of company. The high schemes of youth give place to the gainful arts of a narrower condition.' In the same letter he says that he submits himself with great patience to the critical observations of aunts, cousins, and grandmothers. 'I don't avoid going to taverns, and I don't get drunk.'

It is curious to contrast these youthful criticisms with the social relations subsequently formed by the writer in the same circles with men of European celebrity. As in those days 'a lawyer's library consisted of the classics, the philosophers of mind and the civilians,'[1] the young student was doubtless exploring a wide field of literature while professedly following his father's profession, and not many years had passed over his head when he stood 'foremost in that body of accomplished gentlemen whose friendship and companionship afforded Hume so much pleasure and instruction.'[2] Not only was he resorted to as friend and companion, but as an authority and 'master critic.'[3] To him were submitted, for

[1] Burton's *Life of David Hume*, vol. i. p. 26.
[2] *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 320.
[3] Dr. Somerville's Memoirs. The only published specimen of Sir

counsel and criticism, the MS. of Home's tragedy of 'Douglas,' the MS. of Robertson's 'History of Charles V.,' and the 'Dialogues on Natural Religion' of David Hume. Hume moreover desired Sir Gilbert to undertake the part of interlocutor in these same dialogues, designating that of Cleanthes, the exponent of the doctrine of Design, as suited to his views. Sir Gilbert's reply to Hume on this subject was found among his papers in the form of a rough and unfinished draft, and was inserted by Dugald Stewart in his Preliminary Dissertation to the British Encyclopedia, with the following introductory remark: 'This careless fragment exhibits an interesting specimen of the progress made in Scotland among the higher classes seventy years ago, not only in sound philosophy, but in purity of style.' The view taken by Sir Gilbert of Hume's sceptical arguments appears to have been that adopted subsequently by Reid, Oswald, and Beattie.

In Dugald Stewart's great work on the Philosophy of the Human Mind he refers again to the correspondence on philosophical subjects of Hume with Sir G. Elliot in the following words: 'Sir Gilbert seems to have united with his other well-known talents and accomplishments a taste for abstract disquisitions which rarely occurs in men of the world, accompanied with that soundness and temperance of judgment which in such researches are so indisputably necessary to guard the mind against the illusions engendered by its own

Gilbert's own poetical faculty is a graceful little poem which finds a place in collections of lyrical verse under the title of 'Amynta.'

subtlety.' At the period of his correspondence with Hume on the 'Dialogues,' Sir Gilbert was under thirty. About the same time he took an active part, according to the wont of the Scotch gentleman of his day, in the sittings of the General Assembly. A few years later he became one of the original members of the Poker Club in Edinburgh, instituted in 1762, and for several years supported by some of the most distinguished men in Scotland, David Hume, Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, and others; but before that date he had entered Parliament as M.P. for Selkirkshire, and official life as a Lord of the Admiralty.[1] Two years after his first appearance in the House of Commons he was included in the administration of Pitt and Grenville, composed of the most eminent men of all the sections of the Whigs, and thenceforward to the day of his death he preserved a prominent position among the public men of his time. Without adopting the perhaps partial testimony of his countrymen to his successes in Parliament,[2] we will

[1] Sir Gilbert sat in Parliament for Selkirkshire from 1754 to 1765, and for Roxburghshire from 1765 until his death in 1777. He was appointed Lord of the Admiralty in 1756, Treasurer of the Chambers in 1762, Keeper of the Signet in 1767, Treasurer of the Navy 1770. His first political connections were with Pitt and the Grenvilles; later he became an adherent of Lord Bute. Various circumstances related in Walpole's *History of George III.* and in Sir Gilbert's own papers show that no pains were spared by him to reconcile Pitt and Lord Bute, rendered nugatory by the vanity of the one and the contemptuous bearing of the other.

[2] Dr. Somerville in his memoirs mentions that he attended the debates on the exclusion of Wilkes, and says that those considered the best speakers were Lord North, Sir Gilbert Elliot, and Governor Johnstone. Principal Robertson (author of the *History of Charles V.*) told Dr. Somerville, that in acuteness of reasoning and practical

content ourselves with the testimony of a political enemy and a most competent judge, as decisive of his eminence in the greatest of political assemblies. Horace Walpole, who disliked Sir Gilbert, as he disliked most men, and more especially Scotchmen and friends of Lord Bute, calls Sir Gilbert 'one of the ablest men in the House of Commons,'[1] and on several occasions mentions his abilities and his speeches as remarkable.

But the pressure of public duties, and perhaps the stronger attraction of those literary and philosophical pursuits, ever resumed by Sir Gilbert during his residences at Minto, were equally powerless to divert his eager attention from the education of his sons.

Married in 1747 to Agnes, daughter of Hugh Dalrymple Murray Kynynmound, who had assumed these names on succeeding to the estates of the Murrays of Melgund, in Forfarshire, and Kynynmound in Fife; he had by her six children—Gilbert, born April 23, 1751, Hugh, born 1752, Alexander, Robert, Isabella, Eleanor, of whom the two eldest—Gilbert, and Hugh,—were destined to run distinguished careers in public life.[2]

information Sir Gilbert's speeches excelled all that were delivered in the House. He mentioned especially Sir Gilbert's speeches on the Scotch Militia Bill, and on the exclusion of Wilkes. Boswell quotes his elocution as a model for Scotch orators. Lord Kaimes placed Sir Gilbert Elliot foremost among the men of his acquaintance who had become eminent for their abilities and public services.

[1] Walpole's *History of the Reign of George III.*

[2] And the promise of Sir Gilbert's third son, Alexander, was fully equal to that of his brothers, when death cut short his opening career. He died of fever in India in 1778. Warren Hastings, who always spoke of his abilities with great admiration placed a stone on his remote grave, and alluded to him touchingly in a fine paraphrase of Horace's

In 1762 Gilbert and Hugh, the elder eleven, the younger eight years of age, were placed under the care of a young Scotchman, himself only twenty years of age, who was selected for the office by Dr. Drysdale and Professor Stewart.

To prepare himself for his charge, Mr. Liston was desired to perfect himself in classical knowledge, in law, and *dancing*. This last accomplishment was at that time considered, according to Dr. Carlyle, to be indispensable even as a preparation for the pulpit.

Two years later, Mr. Liston accompanied the boys to Paris, where David Hume undertook a general charge of them; and the letter in which their father announces them to his friend, though it has been already published, may bear insertion here.[1]

Sir G. Elliot to David Hume.

'September 15, 1764.

'Upon full deliberation, I am determined to send you my boys if a tolerable place can be found for their reception. . . . It will be no small consolation to their mother, from whom they are now to be separated for the first time, to know that we are not without a friend

Ode, XVI. Lib. 2, ad Grosphum, which he wrote on his way home from Bengal in 1785:

An early death was Elliot's doom,
I saw his opening virtues bloom,
And manly sense unfold,
Too soon to fade! I bade the stone
Record his name 'midst hordes unknown,
Unknowing what it told.

[1] Published in Burton's *Life of Hume* from the Minto MSS.

in Paris, who will sometimes have an eye to their conduct. If I am not too partial I think you will find in their character much native simplicity and perhaps some little elevation of mind. Send them back to me, my dear Sir, with the same qualities, tempered if you will, but not impaired by the acquisition of some few of those graces which spread such an inexpressible charm through those societies where even you are not ashamed to pass so many precious hours.

. . . But after all, what am I about? At Paris to have children at all, is *du plus mauvais ton du monde*, and I forgot to inform myself, when one happens to have them, whether it be permitted to take any thought about them.

'Before I conclude, allow me in friendship also to tell you, that I think I see you at present on the very brink of a precipice. One cannot too much clear one's mind of all little prejudices, but partiality to one's country is not a prejudice. Love the French as much as you will. Many of the individuals are surely the proper objects of affection; but above all continue an Englishman. You know better than anybody that the active powers of our mind are too much limited to be usefully employed in any pursuit more general than the service of that portion of mankind which we call our country. General benevolence and private friendship will attend a generous mind and a feeling heart into every country; but political attachment confines itself to one.

"Mon *fils*, sur les humains que ton âme attendrie
Habite l'univers, mais aime sa patrie."

'I have not now leisure to trouble you with the few observations my too short stay at Paris had but imperfectly furnished me with. Irreconcilable to the principles of their government, I am delighted with the amenity and gentleness of their manners.'

Hume undertook the friendly duty with which he had been intrusted, and performed it with zeal and unfailing attention, as many letters of his to Sir Gilbert exist to prove; but as the most important of these have been published, we shall only give an extract from one which has a curious relation to future events.

Hume to Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto.[1]

'November 17, 1764.

'As soon as I came from Fontainebleau I went to the Pension Militaire, so it is called, where I had first a conversation with the abbé. I found him exceedingly pleased with your boys. He told me that whenever his two young pupils arrived, he called together all the French gentlemen, who are to the number of thirty or thirty-two, and he made them a harangue. He then said to them that they were all men of quality, to be educated to the honourable profession of arms, that all their wars would probably be with England, that France and that kingdom were Rome and Carthage, whose rivality more properly than animosity never allowed long intervals of peace; that the chance of

[1] Minto MSS., published in Burton's *Life of Hume.*

arms might make them prisoners of arms to Messrs. Elliot, in which case it would be a happiness to them to meet a private friend in a public enemy; that he knew many instances of people whose lives were saved by such fortunate events, and it therefore became them, from views of prudence, and from the generosity for which the French nation was so renowned, to give the best treatment to the young strangers, whose friendship might probably endure and be serviceable to them through life. He added that the effect of this harangue was such that, as soon as he presented your boys to their companions, they all flew to them and embraced them; and have ever since combined to pay them all courtship and regard, and to show them every mark of preference. Everyone is ambitious to acquire the friendship of the two young Englishmen who have already formed connexions more intimate than ever I observed among his other pupils. "Ce que j'admire," added he, "dans vos jeunes amis est qu'ils ont non-seulement de l'esprit mais de l'âme. Ils sont véritablement attendris des témoignages d'amitié qu'on leur rend. Ils méritent d'être aimés, parcequ'ils savent aimer."'

We can easily imagine the scene and the 'effusion,' but if at that moment the veil which hides futurity had been suddenly withdrawn, how would bright cheeks have blanched and gay hearts sickened with dread! 'They are all of them,' said Hume, 'of the best families in France. Hugh says there is not one that is not a marquis or count or chevalier at least;'—and therefore

those young heads were doomed. In the struggles of Rome and Carthage they were to bear small part. Scaffolds and exile were before them; the bitter bread of the stranger for their portion, and for their life's companion the grief than which there is no greater, the memory in misery of happier days. When these times were fulfilled, there were many among the '*emigration*' who, if they remembered the good abbé's harangue, may have thought him gifted with prophetic vision; for in more than one country besides that of France's ancient rival, they found homes under the roof of the Elliots, whose destiny it was throughout their public career to uphold the cause held sacred by their early friends while opposing the Government of France.

Among the most intimate friendships formed by the boys at the Abbé Choquart's were those they made with the Chevalier de Mirabeau and the Comte de Lamarck, afterwards Prince Auguste d'Aremberg, and the chief employment of them all was the practice of the *Prussian* exercises!

From the time of Mr. Liston's connection with the young Elliots until that of their entering Oxford, he constantly reported to Sir Gilbert their progress in their studies; and every day's amusement, every article of their expenses, was submitted to his approval or supervision.

A long roll of Mr. Liston's accounts has been preserved among his correspondence with Sir Gilbert from whence might be framed a table of the expenses of travelling to and from Paris, and of a residence there,

beginning with the cost of boarding houses and masters, and coming down to such minute items as a *pourboire* to the post-boy, a *cadeau* (of 2 lbs. of green tea) 'to the nun at Boulogne,' and the fee of the Savoyard who runs their messages. From the same source we gain an insight into the preparations made by the young Scotchmen for their *début* in the societies which had charmed their father; and perhaps few diaries could be found to tell the tale of an introduction to the *beau monde* more succinctly and cynically than the following entries:

	Frs.	Sous.
For two gold-laced hats	38	
For soap		12
Two bags for the hair and two cocardes	3	12
Two silver shoe-buckles	12	
Two pairs of white silk stockings	18	
Two pairs of pumps	9	
False queues and hair-dressing to Gilbert and Hugh	12	
Two pairs of embroidered ruffles (point de Marseilles)		
Powder, and pommade d'ours for Hugh's hair	6	
A coach to the Duchess of Douglas	6	
A pound of sugar to Gilbert and Hugh for taking Physic	1	

It has often been found, we believe, that a file of old bills has done more than many sermons to awaken a sense of the vanity of worldly pleasure, but in these few entries it is the apple of Sodom itself that is put before us, from the gradual development of bud to blossom culminating in full-blown splendour meet for a Duchess of Douglas, to crumble away, at the world's

first breath, into bitterness and hollowness, and dust and ashes.

The same careful superintendence which watched over the years of childhood was continued through the later and more critical stages of youth and early manhood. From Oxford, from Edinburgh, from Munich, from India, from whatever might be the temporary abiding place of the brothers, they wrote fully and constantly to their father, who answered them with equal regularity. But as an account of this period of the family life has been given in a 'Memoir of Hugh Elliot,'[1] it is unnecessary to go over the same ground: enough, it is hoped, has been said to denote what manner of man was the third Sir Gilbert, and perhaps to fulfil the object of this introduction to his son's correspondence, namely, to bring him nearer to those who will read it by providing them with some knowledge of the influences, actual and traditional, by which the writer's character was formed.

[1] 'Memoir of the Right Hon. Hugh Elliot,' by his granddaughter Lady Minto: published in 1868.

CHAPTER II.

GILBERT ELLIOT, after his return from Paris, was sent with his brother to Edinburgh to the charge of their aunt, Miss Elliot, who introduced them into society. The winters of 1766 and 1767 were passed by them in attendance on lectures on Civil Law, Moral and Natural Philosophy, Humanity, History, and Rhetoric. Of these studies Gilbert was the chief narrator, not omitting to mention the 'dryness' of certain professors who contrived to make their lectures duller than they need have been; and commenting on the want of time to do anything well where too much was attempted. In 1768 both brothers went to Oxford, carrying with them an introductory letter from Lord Mansfield to Dr. Markham, in which they were mentioned in terms of the warmest affection and approval. At Oxford they found no ground to complain of the variety or multiplicity of their studies. Dr. Markham assured them that 'only classical and historical knowledge could make able statesmen, though mathematics and other things were very necessary for a gentleman.' As a baronet's son, Gilbert found himself excused from all college duties and the government of a tutor, and his general impression of the effect of Christ

Church, or of its way of life, as stated to his wife in after years, was, 'that it had a most narcotic influence, and seems to set young men to sleep at some of the most naturally wide-awake years of their life.' Perhaps it was to keep himself awake that he took to cricket, and became an adept in those gymnastic exercises which stood to that generation in lieu of our athletic sports: that he did so we know from a correspondent of ten years later, who, in spite of time and decorum, was at no loss to recognise in him the youth who 'cut capers, stood on his head or his horse's back at pleasure, and was, in short, *le coq du village*.' She might have added who danced on the tight-rope, and performed other feats at Astley's in company with his brother Hugh, establishing a reputation with 'Mr. Merriman' which secured them an *entrée* in that transpontine theatre for many an ensuing day.

In 1770 the brothers were again at Paris, where they attracted the favourable notice of Madame du Deffand and other French celebrities. At this point their paths diverged, Hugh proceeding to Metz, and Gilbert returning to Oxford. There, for a while, we lose trace of him to recover it in an occasional correspondence with the lady destined to become his wife,[1] which forms the germ of the voluminous collection of letters exchanged between them during the many separations entailed

[1] Anna Maria Amyand, eldest daughter of Sir George Amyand, Bart., M.P. Her eldest brother, also Sir George Amyand, married in 1771 Catherine, only daughter and heir of Velters Cornewall, Esq., of Moccas Court, Herefordshire, when he assumed the surname of Cornewall.

upon them in the course of their married lives by public and private exigencies.

From a number of notes, so small in bulk that they may have been slipped into a nosegay, or dropped with a glove, and so slight in matter that the value set on them by those who preserved them must have been a 'fancy price,' we gather that the first acquaintance of the writers began in 1772, when he was twenty-one and she some years younger. The time—summer; the scene—the banks of the Thames (where the families of both parties had found a temporary home); and their experiences much the same as those of half the youth of England who have floated and flirted on those softly-flowing waters:

> Their loves were like all other loves—
> A rose-bud and a pair of gloves;
> A little glow, a little shiver,
> And 'Fly not yet' upon the river.[1]

But to these youthful associations it was due that through life the season of flowering chestnuts, of hay-fields and river-lilies, attracted their footsteps to the scenery of the Thames.

The summer idyll was followed by a London winter, with all the facilities for frequent meetings afforded by balls with suppers, and supper-dances—admirable institutions for persons with serious intentions; and masquerades, no less well suited to the lighter-minded members of society who preferred a guerilla warfare under covert. Miss Amyand shone in such disguises, and a certain

[1] Winthrop Praed.

occasion on which a lively nun and a well-hooded friar discoursed together unrecognised by any indiscreet bystander, is a topic of frequent allusions. But life is not all sunshine, and the unsubstantial airy griefs against which one cannot bring to bear the heavy guns of one's philosophy, serve nevertheless to dim the light. 'What was the use of walking all the morning by her side in the Green Park if her sister would never let go her hand?' 'What good could be found in a box at Ranelagh if opposite neighbours never took their eyes off the adorer of their friends?'

'Murder will out,' says the proverb, and so, says experience, will everything else that people would rather like to keep in. The state of affairs between the young couple became presently known to Sir Gilbert, and Gilbert the younger was advised to visit the Low Countries just as August came round again with its flowery meadows and its shady elms and its shining waters.

The tour was to last from August to November; that is, it was to occupy the whole of the long vacation, the lawyer's holiday; and but for this consideration we should have thought Sir Gilbert would have been wiser in his own interests had he quarrelled with the first man he came across, gone to law with him, and given his son a brief to conduct the case, for business is the surest antidote to love.

> The poor, the foul, the false, love can
> Admit, but not the busied man.[1]

[1] Donne.

'*He* will forget it first, for he has many things he *must* think of. *She* has many things she *may* think of,' said Dr. Johnson of a couple smitten by a common grief; and the observation shows his knowledge of human nature.

Across the Channel we are all in the potential mood, and therefore it is not surprising that the current of the young man's thoughts flowed steadily homewards, and very often in the concrete form of good black ink. Though a pleasant companion had been found for him in the person of Mr. Storer, the places selected for his residence seem to have been singularly destitute of attractions.

At Spa, indeed, he did find Russian and Polish Princesses dancing *cossaques* with matchless grace; and in their society he heard with delight of the high distinction gained by his brother Hugh with the Russian army:[1] but the most exacting of mistresses could find nothing to excite apprehension in his three days' experience of a German Electoral Court.

The Elector of Cologne, 'an old ecclesiastic of some sixty years of age,' held his court at Bonn in the

[1] 'I knew before that my brother had distinguished himself in three different actions against the Turks, by letters to that purpose from Romantzow, commander-in-chief. But I was told yesterday by Prince Repnin that the Empress had bestowed on him her military cross, called the Order of St. George, an order created during the war for the distinction and encouragement of such as I may safely say my brother has proved himself. It is astonishing how high his name is with all foreigners; and when you know him a little better, you will not wonder that I have as much pleasure in his praises as he can have himself.'—*Letter to Miss Amyand.*

summer of 1773, where, surrounded by 'his Grand Chamberlain, Grand Maréchal, Grand Veneur, Grand Écuyer, Grand Commandeur de l'ordre Teutonique, with all other possible grands,' besides the French ambassador, the Governor of Bonn, and the Prime Minister, he dined daily in solemn state at one o'clock, and received the families of fashion to play cards from six to nine every evening. 'In those three days, everybody being indeed very attentive and very politely-disposed to the two English strangers, I did not find it difficult to become more or less acquainted with, I believe, every member of the court of Bonn. I told them with how much regret I was absolutely constrained to leave them; but to tell the truth I don't well know how we should have got to the end of another day. My maccaroni friend left the apartment or assembly at court ten minutes after it began, protesting that he would rather cut his throat than stay in such a court a quarter of an hour—which obliged me to swear myself black in the face that he had had a violent headache all day and that it would have split in the room if he had attempted to play at cards. We had a little opportunity of learning something of their politics. We found them all very busy in keeping a little Westphalia clergyman out of the ministry of Cologne, and we saw the little Westphalia clergyman very busy to get himself in. We saw Madame l'Abbesse of the Chapter of Bonn setting her cap at his old dry electoral highness, and we saw the prime minister's wife looking very cross on the abbesse, —all of which seemed so serious to those about us and

seemed so little and unimportant to us, that it almost tempted me to think that if a man were to drop from the clouds and look into St. James's, or take a peep even into Westminster Hall and the King's Bench, or consider, in short, the most weighty business of the world—if anything can be more weighty than that of my brethren in the Hall—he might perhaps wonder as much at what we were all about, or how we could amuse ourselves with such work, as we did when we saw fifty people gaping at a little old man whom we had not yet learned to be afraid of. But this being rather a melancholy thought and not very philanthropical, we shall dismiss it with your good leave.'

Bonn was the furthest point of their journey, and thence, without a word of Drachenfels or Rolandseck, the travellers retraced their steps with joy—Mr. Storer being as well pleased to see an approaching termination to all the horrors of dirty inns, bad fare, post-waggons and barges, as his companion to feel the distance lessening between himself and the lady of his love.

After a hurried tour through North Holland,[1] they spent a fortnight at the Hague—'a village, and yet the residence of the Prince, of the States, and of all public persons.' 'Everybody here seems to be sound asleep,' he writes in one of his letters; 'and all those

[1] From Leyden he writes: 'This university had the honour of educating Mr. John Wilkes, and he is remembered in Holland with the consideration he deserves, as a very clever man and a good scholar. He was esteemed among the most studious of his time.'

who live long amongst them cannot fail of soon taking a nap with the rest.' In another he says: 'We have been presented to the Prince and Princess of Orange, and to the principal inhabitants of the Hague, to whose houses we go every evening to, I think, rather dull assemblies. In England, a young man is ashamed of being seen at an old woman's assembly; here we esteem ourselves fortunate to have one for every night of the week.'

In November 1773 he returned to London, but withdrew from society to give himself up to his profession; and whereas in 1772–3 his sister's letters to Hugh had described him as taking a full part in the amusements of the day, he is only mentioned in their correspondence of the three following years with reference to his professional pursuits. His state of mind at this time may be guessed from the tone of a few sentences in a letter which he wrote to Hugh in May 1774. After condoling with him on their 'misfortunes *en fait de finances*,' he proceeds thus:—'Still I cannot help feeling convinced that some time or other at least one of us will get beforehand with the world, and I consider that one watering will make both grow. At least, if it does not, I have *at present no great motive for wishing my own single growth.* We are none of us so selfish as not to know that the only object of success is the privilege of sharing it with somebody. . . . You will easily guess that by success I don't here mean only hard money, but every advantage of situation, of credit or respect; and in this sense, to be sure, the

more we divide the greater will the dividends be—contrary to the common rules of arithmetic.' In the same letter he excuses himself for having little to tell which can amuse, as he had been quite out of the world, —'Last Saturday, however, I had a very pleasant breakfast at Kensington, where Lady Charlotte[1] had got together a pleasant party.'

On August 31, 1774, Gilbert described to Hugh his first circuit, and recorded the receipt of his first fee. 'My first circuit has fixed me still more in the love of law and of the society it has thrown me into. More valuable men and friends are to be found in no line in England or the world, I am well convinced, either as to good understanding, abilities, or character. I had no more success than was to be expected; that is, nothing at all. But I see that I may very well keep my place whenever I shall become entitled to have one in this slow march. I took my first fee at Durham, which was pretty near, of course, and required no duty. In the meanwhile I met with great civility, on my father's account, all through the country.'

From this period he appears in the family cypher as *Mr. Greatwig*, in allusion to his sister's assertion that he sported the greatest wig ever seen at the Bar; and in the following spring, Sir Gilbert wrote to Hugh that '*Mr. Greatwig* goes on successfully; he appeared some time ago on an appeal at the Bar of the House of Lords and did extremely well; he has been since before the committee of elections on the Wigton case, where

[1] Lady Charlotte Burgoyne.

Dashwood, his client, prevailed, and Lord Dalrymple's friend Newton was beaten. He has been some days engaged on the Poole election for Ch. Fox,[1] and I am this moment come from hearing him sum up the whole evidence from record-charters and parole testimony, interspersed with several law-points. He acquitted himself much beyond my expectations; his arrangement was excellent, elocution clear and manly, and his arguments put with force and conciseness; his manner modest and gentlemanlike. He seems to have a very good choice and command of words. The King always asks about his performances, and both to himself and his father much approves the line he has taken; this is lucky, as it gives countenance to the profession.' Of this success, mentioned with pride in all the letters, Gilbert said himself: 'The utmost that it is possible to say of my endeavours last winter at the Bar is, that my faults and inabilities are not so considerable as to make me despair of removing some of them, if I am so fortunate as to have opportunities by a continuance of practice; but you must not think that in any one instance I have been the least distinguished, or given the slightest hopes of superiority. This is the fair truth.'[2]

Nevertheless within a year from the date of this

[1] 'Mr. Fox considered the speech of Wedderburn on the Douglas cause as the best legal argument he had heard, or at least second to none but that delivered by Sir Gilbert Elliot on the Poole election, of which Mr. Fox always spoke with unbounded admiration.'—Lord Holland's *Memoirs of the Whig Party*, vol. ii. p. 9.

[2] Gilbert Elliot to Hugh Elliot, June 30, 1775.

modest estimate of his prospects, he achieved a professional success which promised at no distant period a position of independence, and justified a renewal of his engagement with Miss Amyand; on this occasion with the entire approbation of his family.

He was actually on the point of announcing his matrimonial intentions to his father, when he was asked to stand for Morpeth; and from that place, during his election, he wrote the following somewhat characteristic letter to 'Maria:'—'In the very instant of my exordium, when my father and I were both beginning to look foolish, and be afraid of each other, when it did not seem possible to delay a moment longer, Storer knocked at the door, asked for me, and proposed the business which brought me here within eighteen hours after I saw him. Will you forgive me if I rather found it a relief? . . . We were thrown into an uproar by this embassy of Storer's. My father liked it, and was very happy, but became proportionally busy, hurried, and agitated. I flatter myself I was the coolest of the family.'

The summer of 1776 was an eventful one to the Elliots. With it came Alick from India; and Hugh from Munich; its prime witnessed the first decisive step in Gilbert's public career, and the 'smiling dawn of promise' that opened his domestic life; and before it declined into autumn the marriage of the youngest daughter of the house took place.

It was to each and every one of the family the last summer of his youth—the last spent under a parent's

roof—the last before one gap either of marriage or death had taken place in the home-circle. A hope expressed by Lady Elliot in a letter to her son Hugh, written at the opening of the year, was fulfilled: all her six children were once more gathered round their parents in the scene of their early days—their joyous spirits undimmed by any foreboding that such a gathering would occur no more; and to us to whom their unknown future has become a half-forgotten past, it is tempting to linger where the streams so soon to part are still merged in the bosom of the parent lake, reflecting the same sunshine and shadows.

Some pencil-drawings and black shades are still extant, which represent various members of the family, and were probably done at this time, for at no other can Alick and Hugh have sat for the companion portraits which hang side by side at Minto. While the extraordinary erection on Isabella's head—composed of hair, feathers, and flowers—explains certain passages in her letters of this date:—'Poor Alick's eastern eyes behold us with despair. He could not bear flowers nor feathers nor stays, so to please him we have almost left off feathers—*c'est bien complaisant*—but we can go no further.' Again, 'The heads are higher than ever, with feathers *en rayons de soleil* and *le jardin Anglais*—fruit, turnips, and potatoes; the gowns trimmed the same way. To give you some idea, my gown for the birthday was trimmed with grapes, acorns, and roses, so that I looked like a walking hothouse, but upon the whole it was pretty.' No wonder that Lady Barrymore, one of

the first to import the new fashion from Paris, was mobbed at public places—which, by the way, 'she rather liked.' Lady Elliot describes Alick, on his first return from India, as remarkably 'genteel' in figure, with the air of a man of fashion, but not at all '*swainish!*' Everybody at home and abroad agreed that Hugh was one of the best-looking maccaronis of the day.

To the charm of youth and good looks he added the graceful polish acquired in the life of courts; and yet there were traits about him which might not have seemed out of place in one of his half-tamed ancestors; irresistible impulses to snatch at wild adventures, sudden disgusts with the restraints of social splendour, yearnings after the free life of the wilderness, and a sort of gallant but not politic readiness for any combat offered him, he bearing his part therein without much respect of persons.

During his mission to Munich, Hugh Elliot had given proofs of capacity and energy which obtained for him a transference from the Court of Bavaria to the far more important mission of Berlin, though when he received the appointment in the summer of 1776, he had not long entered his twenty-fifth year. A characteristic story is told of a mystification which ensued on the announcement of his new distinction.

While dining at a friend's house in company with a newly arrived diplomatist from Naples, the conversation turned on some recent diplomatic appointments, when the Neapolitan, addressing himself to Hugh Elliot, with

whom he was totally unacquainted, but who had borne a lively part in the discussion, said, 'Monsieur, est-ce vrai ce qu'on dit qu'on va envoyer à Berlin un jeune homme qui ne fait que débuter, qui ne sait rien—un *blancbec* enfin!' 'Monsieur, je n'en sais rien.' 'Monsieur on l'assure, c'est très à regretter &c.' 'Monsieur, je suis dans une ignorance parfaite; mais pourriez-vous me dire si c'est vrai ce que l'on dit, qu'on nous envoie de Naples un homme des plus ridicules—un vrai Polichinelle?' 'Oh! monsieur, je vous en prie—mais, que dites-vous donc? mais, ce Polichinelle—c'est moi!' 'Eh bien, monsieur,' with an air of charming simplicity; 'le blancbec—c'est moi!'

A mystification had no doubt a charm for Hugh, and another instance of it gave rise to an anecdote which in its day amused the official world of London when brought home by a traveller from Munich. An extraordinary impression, he said, had been produced there by certain mysterious relations discovered to subsist between the legations of Great Britain and France. Their respective chiefs, being much of the same age, had naturally fallen into habits of friendly intercourse, but when these suddenly deepened into an intimacy, the extent of which it was evidently desired to conceal from the public, the curiosity of their colleagues was aroused. They met daily at each other's houses, were shut up for hours together; at these times no visitors were admitted; and on any allusion being made to their meetings the countenances of both ministers wore an expression of impenetrable reserve. Nothing could be

more clear than that a secret understanding existed between the two great Powers. The Court took alarm; all possible machinery, lawful and unlawful, went to work to discover the plot so carefully concealed, but in vain, till the first court ball revealed the secret. The representatives of His Sacred Majesty of England, and of His Most Catholic Majesty of France, had been taking *dancing-lessons* together!

Summer, with all its charm of moonlight evenings and water-parties on the Thames, had brought about many pleasant meetings between the dwellers at Twickenham and their neighbours, among whom, at Bushy, was the family of Lord North. With them Mr. Eden was domiciled, as secretary to Lord North, and so it happened that before the holidays were over Eleanor Elliot had consented to be his wife. They were married in September, and how ugly the first gap in the home circle appeared to those she left, is best described by her brother Gilbert.

Gilbert Elliot to Miss Amyand.

'Lincoln's Inn: September 26, 1776.

'She is now fairly gone, and we have lost her. In spite of the sincere pleasure her excellent fortune ought to give, and really does give me, this day's scene has left a cast of melancholy on me. It is perfectly true that she can hardly fail of being happy, but it is certainly true that she has left for life her father's and her brother's house, and family, and society, in which she has lived and been loved and wrapped up through

the happy years that precede her time of life. We all love her as well as before, and shall have as much of her affectionate heart as ever; but we are no longer her home. She has got a new one, and we can never recover her. It is lucky that there is not room for too many thoughts at once, or that, when there are too many, they crowd and jumble one another, so as that none can be felt distinctly enough to have its full force. For if half the melancholy things had shown themselves impertinently this morning, which have since found their way to a little cooler reflection, the bride would not have been so exemplary as I assure you, for your encouragement, she was. . . .

'As soon as she had signed her name, I took her under my arm, and fairly, without a word or look of the farewell kind, hurried her into Eden's coach—he was in almost as soon as she—I shook her by the hand —God bless her! and away they went. And God bless them! I say again and again.'

The last letter written by Gilbert before his marriage relates to his father's illness. A cold caught on the river in summer had left a cough, and before the winter, he, with Lady Elliot, Isabella, and Hugh, were on their way to Nice. Kind and feeling letters from Maria Amyand seem to have cheered the travellers on the road; but at Marseilles their further progress was arrested by Sir Gilbert's increased illness, and he died there on January 11, 1777, shortly after receiving

intelligence of his son's marriage, which took place on the 3rd of the same month.

For the next four or five years the young couple were rarely or never asunder, and the story of their life at this period can only be gathered from the family letters to Hugh, for the most part already published. From these we know that Gilbert (now Sir Gilbert), having on his father's death been returned for Roxburghshire, he and his wife spent their time between London and Minto, which they dearly loved; their constant affection soothing the last suffering years of Lady Elliot,[1] and the subsequent desolation which fell on Isabella. Harriet Amyand found a home with them till she left it for that of Mr. Harris; Hugh received from brother and sister unfailing interest in his affairs; and political as well as domestic interests in common continued to bind together the Elliots and the Edens.

[1] Lady Elliot died in 1779.

CHAPTER III.

THE affection entertained by Lady Elliot for her sister, Mrs. Harris, seems to have been one of the most strongly-marked traits in her character. Left orphans at an early age, the elder had not only loved but protected the younger, and, as has been said before, when Maria married, Harriet found a home with her. Through life the great pleasure of the sisters was to be together, and when apart their correspondence was closely kept up. Their first separation took place in the autumn of 1777, when Harriet, at the early age of sixteen, married Mr. Harris,[1] then British Minister at St. Petersburg, and accompanied her husband to Russia; not without casting many a longing lingering look behind. 'For you are to know, Lady Elliot,' wrote she on her journey, 'that of all the countries I have seen, I like none so well as England; for though the views are fine, and the mountains high and vast and great, and the rivers wide, and the towns fortified, I prefer the little Remenham,[2] with the purling Thames, and the gradual hills, and the green boat, and the sight of you rowing in it, to all and everything. By-the-

[1] Created a K.C.B. in 1779, and a Peer in 1788.

[2] A villa on the Thames belonging to the Amyands.

bye, that sweet, dear, good, charming creature, Mr. Harris, has given me leave to hope that we may some day purchase the beloved cottage, and you and I will meet there, and see the plane tree, and the gooseberry and currant *trees* we used to delight in.'

In 1781 it appeared that four years' experience of the climate of Russia had impaired Lady Harris's health in a degree which rendered some change imperative, and it was in consequence determined that she should return home to reside with her sister until her husband should be able to join her. The journey in those days was long and difficult, and Sir Gilbert offered himself as an escort to bring the young wife and her nursery safely to England:—a proceeding which Isabella laughed at, as 'a piece of knight-errantry,' and which produced from Mr. Eden an enquiry as to whether Lady Elliot would go out with her husband, or Sir James return with his wife?

Sir Gilbert left Minto in June, and having passed safely the dangers of Bagshot Heath and Hounslow, than which he anticipated none greater, he proceeded to London to fit himself out with weapons of offence and defence, till, as he wrote, 'I fancy myself now one of the most formidable men in Europe; a blunderbuss for Joe, a pair of double barrels to stick in my belt, and a cut-and-thrust hanger with a little pistol in the hilt, to hang by my side. Robinson Crusoe was a lamb to me.' For social display he furnished himself with a pair of buckles of exorbitant price, and thus equipped for peace and war he set off on his travels; and how

much greater the undertaking was in those days than it is in ours, may be guessed from the fact that the first stage of his voyage from Westminster Bridge to Gravesend, where he embarked in a German vessel for Hamburg, was performed in a sailing boat and occupied *fourteen hours*.

The only adventure of the passage to Hamburg was an alarm of a privateer :—'We were told such stories of robbery and plunder on board neutral or even friendly vessels, that if we had been passengers in a stage, and to pass Hounslow or Bagshot Heath in the dark, it would not have been worse. An innocent sloop or two bore down towards us, which, like many *an honest apothecary*, we voted thieves. At last a cutter privateer was announced to us. It was pleasant to see every man make out a highwayman's purse as naturally as if we had been in the five fields at Chelsea. As for me, my first thought was where I could *hide* my pistols and blunderbuss. All this fuss ended in smoke. The privateer was an honest one from Leith, and only asked us our name.'

No doubt the sailors, 'different in all things from ours as sailors can be,' sang a *Te Deum* for their escape ; for Sir Gilbert, after praising their temperance, and describing the two religious services (they were Lutherans) which they daily performed at *sea*, goes on to say :—'I doubt this religion is somewhat founded in fear rather than love, for they begin their worship only on going out to sea, and leave it off as soon as they come to fresh water. That is to say, they pray and

sing psalms when they have least leisure, but, as they think, most occasion for it, and leave it off when they have nothing to do, but nothing to fear. Our English pilot disapproves of this custom extremely; he says, it is very well to pray when a man is in the mind for it, but then he need not make such a noise, and *has no right to disturb the watch.*'

From the time he touched *terra firma* Sir Gilbert wrote to Lady Elliot from every stage of his journey. But his most interesting experiences are comprised in the following half-dozen letters:—

'Berlin: July 10, 1781.

'I left Hamburg on Thursday, and travelled in post-waggons—changing waggons every stage till Sunday morning, when, to my great satisfaction, and to the relief of my very great impatience, I arrived at my brother's door. I passed with the servants for an English courier, having come the last stage on horseback; and the first person I saw was *Liston*,[1] who, although he had expected me, seemed almost overcome with surprise. Hugh was told a courier was arrived, and when I appeared gave all the marks of astonishment with which he could have received my ghost. He had not the smallest intimation of my journey, or the occasion for it, so you may imagine his wonder at seeing me drop from the clouds.

[1] R. Liston, Esq., *ci-devant* tutor of Hugh Elliot, his private secretary during his missions to Munich and Berlin, and subsequently himself foreign Minister and ambassador.

'Mrs. Elliot[1] was then informed, and the business was broke to her, as she is not very well; in the meanwhile I ran up to embrace, first, the wet-nurse, whom I took for her, and then her maid—every female, in short, who opened the door—till my expectations were at length gratified and answered by herself. She was, it seems, a little afraid of the interview, and so was I (among friends), although my impatience and curiosity were far beyond my fears. I really like her extremely. What you have heard of her beauty is not exaggerated. Her complexion is her only fault, being one of the *fairest* I have ever seen; her hair is extremely light, and *yet* extremely beautiful. Her features are quite classical, and yet remarkably delicate—which is, indeed, the character of her whole figure; her teeth are very good. She is tall, and perfectly well as well as elegantly made; in her manner she is natural, sensible, and good-humoured. I take her, and indeed I see her, to be extremely clever, and her disposition seems excellent. In short, I have discovered no fault in her, except the want of a large fortune, which I think would suit her better than great poverty; and I am informed, though I have seen no marks of it, that she has a little impatience in her temper.[2]

'Berlin is now almost empty, and they may enjoy as much retirement and domestic leisure as they like.

[1] Hugh Elliot's first wife, Charlotte von Krauth.

[2] Sir Gilbert's stay at Berlin was not long, but before he left he saw reason to thank heaven who had not made him the Darby of such a Joan.

This seems to be the taste of both at present. She rises at seven o'clock, works hard with German grammars and dictionaries for several hours, takes a turn, or amuses herself with the organ or harp, which she can sing to; drives at a quarter after two—a drive or a walk, a little company in the Parc, and an early supper at home. As for him, he has got, as Sir Peter Teazle is told by his old friend, quite a settled married look, and is as domestic an animal as his fat spaniel. He sits in the forenoon in his nightcap (which is more becoming than mine), has had no flight of any sort ever since the day before yesterday, and talks of nothing but the necessity of marriage at a certain time of life—its comforts—its being in the order of nature—its use in the way of reformation—the beauty and good qualities of his wife, and the inclination he feels to live in complete retirement, both as to the pleasures and the business of the world. She really has made great progress in English, and fags at it like a schoolboy. Liston is the schoolmaster. . . .

'I propose to buy some sort of machine to carry me with more convenience to Petersburg than gentlemen travel with from Newgate to Tyburn, which has been literally my conveyance night and day. The pace under three miles an hour—the sun on my head, and the postillion or carter's tobacco-pipe under my nose. Yet each of these clowns has a French horn, with which he makes all inferior carts turn out of the road with all the dignity of a man in office. You know our postillions are apt, by way of a dash, to

scamper full gallop through a town or by a rival inn. This, no doubt, is vanity of its sort. There is the same vanity here, but it shows itself in another way, for we always stop in a village and entertain the inhabitants with a little music on the French horn, just as travellers do under Westminster Bridge. I was asked the first night whether I chose clean sheets, because if I insisted on it they would give me some. In short, all that is as miserable as possible; and it does not add to the pleasure of one's reflections on the poor depressed countenance of the country, to see in all the little towns remarkably good-looking well-appointed troops. It seems as if a country were only for the use of an army, instead of an army being for the use of the country. Happy England! in these respects, in spite of all the business we have on our hands. Prussia is, no doubt, differently circumstanced, and the Elector of Brandenburgh would perhaps neither have made, nor could support, a powerful kingdom with less efforts; but the success of this sort of ambition, however glorious for the founder, is obviously miserable for the people. Here ends this lesson.

'I should have given you a little account of my presentation to the Queen, and of her little court, but I cannot now be very full on this subject. I shall only say that though French is the *ton* of the King and a good deal of the better sort of people here, yet nature has made them much more like English, or perhaps Scots, than any models they have chosen to imitate. What I have seen of the people I like very tolerably,

but I have seen far too little to judge. As for the women, beauty is very precious here, for it seems very rare. I have seen but one pretty girl since I have been here—Madlle. de Maréchale. . . . . The little Princess Fred of Prussia also took my fancy very much; she is a meek little soul, and very pretty to boot. She would have been a treasure for the Prince of Wales, but I understand she is now betrothed to the Prince-Royal of Denmark.'[1]

'Harris's Country House, Petersburg: August, 1781.

. . . . 'Harriet is better than when you parted, but I think not so well as she imagines. She is considerably improved in point of substance, but not a grain too much, and only ceases to be Sir James's old joke of the picture of Nobody. She is really extremely pretty, and, much against my own interests, I must acknowledge that a little rouge, which she puts on very well, is a great advantage to her. If I did not think you quite handsome enough, and trust you think so too, I should not, perhaps, have said so much. . . . . I am much struck by the majesty of the Empress Catherine, by the mixture of greatness and singularity in Potemkin, and by the magnificence of the city and court, which is not only unknown to us, but beyond our imagination. It is impossible to journalise my last week under a volume, and, after all, these descriptions seldom do more than empty the brain of the writer without filling that of the reader. I have seen Harris's house and garden in town;

[1] She married the Duke of York.

the town, quays, palaces, and gardens. Dined with Potemkin; saw his garden, pavilion, and colonnade; was presented to the Empress,[1] to the great Duke and Duchess; was at a masquerade at the summer palace, and at the great Duchess's fête. Have been at Peterhof, Oranienbaum, Cronstadt, with Tschernicheff [*the High Admiral*]; saw all that was to be seen there; breakfasted at Admiral Gregg's, dined on board his ship. Have seen a Russian play with a ballet at Czarsco Zelo. Have been presented to all the foreign ministers; have seen the old Countess Romantzow in Peter the Great's house. Count Nicholas Romantzow—a family likeness to his brother Sergi—one of the most agreeable men here. The Maréchal Gallitzin's one evening . . was asked for country-dances—could give no account of them . . . have walked in [*Narischkin's*] garden with the flying bridges, between this house and Petersburg — very pretty; with many other particulars too tedious to mention.'[2] . . .

'Near St. Petersburg: August 11, 1781.

'I am so full of business, my dearest Maria, that you will be on short commons to-day. Besides that, honours have been so profusely heaped on my head of late that I doubt whether it will any longer become me to treat you with the familiarity I have hitherto stooped to with you. The day before yesterday Harriet

[1] Catherine II.

[2] At the foot of this letter is written in pencil, 'Revised and corrected by me, Harriet Mary Harris.' In the same handwriting are the words in brackets inserted in the text of the letter.

and myself took leave of the Grand Duke and Duchess at the summer palace in Petersburg. This was performed by half after one—at half after three we arrived at Prince Potemkin's country-house, near Zarsco Zelo, fifteen miles from Petersburg, through the sun and the dust, all dressed and covered with diamonds. Harriet had the honour of dining at Potemkin's table — a distinction which I am informed never befell a modest woman before. At six we were presented to the Empress at Zarsco Zelo; kissed her hand and took leave. You must understand that, so far as regards me, this circumstance alone of being received at her favourite country residence, where her retreat is generally inaccessible to strangers, was of itself a very gracious attention. What shall we say therefore when I add that I was invited, together with Harriet and Sir James, to the concert which awaited the Empress in a summer-house on the banks of a fine piece of water in the garden? We followed her to this place, where Harriet and Sir James had the honour of playing a pool at commerce with her Majesty, and myself to play a rubber of whist at another table—excellent music going on the while. We then followed the Empress in her walk, which conducted us towards a couple of barges on the piece of water I mentioned before. The Empress entered one of these, and named her company. After Harriet and Sir James were placed, I was surprised with this fresh honour, and was called to a seat in the barge. The company consisted of eight in all. I sat opposite to the Empress, and if

I had listened imprudently to my ambition, I might, by stretching a point, have touched her imperial knee with mine. To be serious, her whole behaviour on the occasion of Harriet's *congé* was infinitely gracious; and as a humble retainer in her suite, I had the advantage of receiving a share of that civility which was addressed to her. The opportunity which our little voyage on the lake gave me of observing so nearly so extraordinary a woman was singular in the case of a traveller. Her countenance and conversation are strongly marked with understanding, and her manner is completely that of a woman of fashion. She has the talent of doing two things which are seldom done together. With the greatest ease and civility in her behaviour, she never loses any part of her dignity; and with the greatest dignity I have ever seen in her manner, she puts her company perfectly at their ease.

'Sir James has sent for me, so I must abridge what remains. We spent yesterday in driving to Admiral Gregg's country-house, where we dined, seeing Peterhoff, &c., &c., &c. Amongst the many things I saw yesterday I can only name in my present hurry the room furnished with the heads painted by Rotari[1] at Peterhoff. I think you would pass your life there contentedly. There are, I think, no less than 600 heads, one more beautiful than another, and in that number a sufficient variety is preserved; their charac-

[1] Rotari, painter, born at Verona, 1707; became court painter at St. Petersburg; died there in 1767. His best picture is said to be a Repose in Egypt in the Dresden Gallery.

ter is perfect nature and beauty. We certainly set out on Thursday next.'

'Warsaw: Saturday, September 4, 1781.

'We arrived here without killed, wounded, or missing, on Wednesday last.

'. . . Warsaw is at present like most other great towns at this season—a desert. We have, however, found in it all that could interest us. At Warsaw there is nothing to be seen but the king,[1] and there is nothing like him to be seen at any other court in the world. Harriet will tell you of his beauty. I shall certainly pack my ward off as soon as I can. He is in feature more like Harry Errington than anybody else I remember, but there is a small difference, the king's countenance being as full of character as the other's is vacant. The expression is that of sense and gentleness. For understanding, information, accomplishment, politeness, gallantry, and misfortunes, he excels all crowned, and I am disposed to believe all uncrowned,

[1] 'The king, Stanislas Augustus Poniatowski, *well brought up*; met him on the road between Moncotoff and Warsaw in the dusk of the evening, Harriet introduced to him there. He met us at supper at the Stackelbergs', and afterwards at Princess Czartoriska's. We supped at his country palace. He speaks English with remarkable propriety, and is well acquainted with us. He was some time in England, and told a story of his cousin the Duchess of Gordon. He sent an estafette forward to order our horses, and gave us a provision of wine, bread, and water. Danced a polonaise with Harriet in the garden. Count Stackelberg, Russian ambassador, was ambassador at the Partition—governs Poland, and affects it in his manner both to the king and his subjects. His two sons are to travel to England.'—*Notes in Sir Gilbert's Pocket-book.*

heads also. . . . I should like, however, to ask him a question or two. The calamities of his reign are so variously related and variously attributed, and it is so impossible for a stranger to learn, or for anyone perhaps but himself to teach me the truth, that I fear there must always remain some reserve in one's love or pity. He comes into society as a private man, and if any king can be as comfortable as his subjects, it is he. Harriet's first introduction to him was on the high road. We were in the Russian ambassador's carriage, and the king was sitting with some friends on a bench by the side of the road. Our carriage was stopped, we got out, and Harriet was introduced. They sat down with several others on the bench. I, with some others, sat on chairs immediately behind. A very pleasant conversation went on in French and English, which he speaks equally well, for about half-an-hour. We then went to the Russian ambassador's house, where we went to sup. The king came there soon after. We all sat down round a large card-table and conversed till supper was served. I sat next him at supper, and was asked a variety of questions respecting England, the House of Commons, the character and abilities of the different members, and the society of England, which showed both a regard for the country and a thorough acquaintance with it. We are invited to sup at his house tomorrow, and despairing of anything better after it, we propose to say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servants depart in peace," and shall set out for Vienna on Monday.'

'September 6, 1781.

'We are now 100 miles from Warsaw, on our road to Vienna. The various plagues of travellers have fallen pretty heavily upon us in this part of our progress. We are unfortunately married to two very cumbersome wives which are always ailing something or other, and which it is difficult either to carry forward or to leave behind us. I am talking of the coaches. The servants broke four pair of wheels in one day; when we had got half-a-day's journey from Warsaw another of its wheels gave way, and we were obliged to send Sam back to Warsaw with the ruins of the wheel to have it repaired. In the meanwhile we proceeded with all the ladies and children in our coach, and a Russian footman with myself on the box. The coach was so heavy, the sand so deep, and the horses, tackle, and drivers so bad, that we were ten hours doing a stage of fifteen miles, having passed half the night in a wood, from which all our labour could not extricate us, till by despatching three postillions at different times we obtained a reinforcement of men and cattle. The next stage of ten miles employed us six hours, and in the middle of it the nurse, who had caught an ague, was seized with her fit, and it became impossible to proceed with her in the coach. Half-an-hour's repose on the ground, with vinegar to her temples and water to drink, enabled us to pack her up in hay on a *kebithka* and bring her on, through a very scorching day, to the end of our stage. . . . On our arrival last night it was perceived that our iron crane-neck was broken in two. This was probably the

crisis of our misfortunes. Both carriages broken, our party scattered over the face of Poland, and some of our troops in the hospital. The inferior grievances of naughty children, loss of my travelling-coat, which was my bedclothes, having left our provision of water behind us, and having broken the blinds of the coach, hardly deserve to be mentioned. I trust we shall be qualified for the parts of Job and Grizzle by the time of our arrival. I cannot boast, however, of *our* having made much progress as yet in these characters. For my own part, all merit being comparative, I am disposed to be in some degree contented under this sort of trial, when I compare it with those which are inflicted on us, in God's wrath, during our residence in great towns. The very day of our arrival in such places, where a little solitary repose would be very acceptable, we must run into the jaws of ambassadors, courtiers, and kings. From breakfast till bedtime we are in full dress. Those to whom letters have first presented us, present us in their turn to still newer friends. Regular visiting takes place, numerous dinners, succeeded by posting during the digestion, through dusty and burning roads, to houses and English gardens in the environs, then posting back again (all this time full dressed, and without the privilege of opening a button) to whist and conversation, which is instantly followed by a repetition of the dinner in a long and crowded supper. Next morning the same life begins again, interspersed perhaps, for variety, with going to court and such incidents. You know how exactly suited to my habits and inclinations

these pleasures are. There is, however, no hard labour without its reward, and I must fairly confess, that although in the execution these things are as disagreeable to me as you may easily imagine, yet after they are over I am glad to have gone through them, and even in some passages of such days I have found much satisfaction. We have seen a variety of characters, and such as afford a great deal of pleasant speculation. Particularly in Poland, where romance is the leading feature, and where it is indulged, and therefore displayed, to the utmost, there seems hardly one sober head on a lady's shoulders; and the general toleration, or rather establishment, of this sort of religion in Poland, and the absence of many scruples which are elsewhere rather in the way of romance, altogether give it such a full swing as renders this country more entertaining to travellers than most others. What will be the reward of our labours at Vienna I do not know, but of the labours themselves I doubt we are certain. I am afraid you will not thank me when I tell you that I pant after the quiet of the Birdcage Walk.'

'Vienna: September 15, 1781.

'. . . We both find Vienna the pleasantest of our halts. The society is renowned through Europe. It is extremely agreeable, and has the merit of having not a thread of blue worsted on any leg among them. Good humour, cordial welcome, excellent living, and *decent* conduct, form the character of the circle at Vienna. Prince Kaunitz must be reserved for conversation. La Bruyère would find it difficult to write him. His sin-

gularities naturally strike a stranger, who can see no further with his own eyes; but those who have lived their lives with him and under him put these particularities a good deal out of one's sight or mind, by the testimony of a whole people in matters more essential. He is universally beloved by a nation which he has governed for thirty years; and in all that time it is said confidently that, with absolute power, no man has had reason to complain of an injury from his hand. He was implicitly trusted by the Empress-Queen,[1] and is now not only trusted, but loved and indulged in all his peculiarities, by the Emperor,[2] whose own manners are as contrary to those of his minister as those of the Duke of Buccleuch can be to the Duke of Roxburghe.[3] Prince Kaunitz has shown Harriet the most distinguished civilities, and has won her heart, not more by very *gallant* attentions to herself, than by some flattering things he has said, and I believe sincerely, of Sir James. . . .

'We are pleased with the gradual improvement of the roads, country, and climate, as we got out of Poland and towards the sun. We began with crab apples and pears, then sour apples and pears, then blue plums, and at length vineyards on every hill. The day before we arrived here baskets of peaches were thrust into the coach, and the people fought for who should sell us a basketful for a halfpenny. We bought about sixty

[1] Maria Theresa. [2] Joseph.

[3] The celebrated book-collector, who is said to have had the shy and reserved manners of a student.

peaches for three halfpence; and the fellows seemed to think they had played a trick on a traveller, and cheated us. I saw immediately afterwards a cartload of melons, which I daresay we might have had for a penny, if we could have afforded a couple of post-horses more to carry them for us,—all this I will *shwear*.'

Isabella Elliot, writing to her brother Hugh at Berlin, describes the meeting of the sisters, Lady Elliot and Lady Harris, as 'a scene of rapture,' and adds a few polite comments on the improvement in Lady Harris's looks, 'who had become really pretty.'

CHAPTER IV.

1782 to 1786.

From the autumn of 1781, when Sir Gilbert returned with Lady Harris from Petersburg, till the parliamentary session of 1786-7, he and Lady Elliot were seldom separated; therefore, for fuller information of his position and opinions in connection with the various political crises by which he was more or less affected in this interval, reference must be made to his letters to Sir James Harris and to his brother Hugh.

It will be remembered that Sir Gilbert entered Parliament in the summer of 1776, immediately before the fatal illness had declared itself which terminated in his father's death. Hence, father and son never sat in Parliament together; and perhaps to this circumstance it may be in part attributed that from the first, Sir Gilbert held a peculiarly independent position there. In a letter to Hugh, dated January, 1778, his mother wrote:—'His (Gilbert's) appearance in Parliament has raised him high in opinion, or rather in expectation, for it must be followed by subsequent ones. He is in a great degree independent, and I am sure very much unconnected except with the

King and Lord Suffolk.' But though not a regular adherent of the Ministry his agreement with them on the main question of the day, the American war, induced him to give it a general support; his political conduct being probably in no small measure influenced by feelings such as those expressed in a letter to Hugh:—'The parricide joy of some in the losses of their country makes me mad. They don't disguise it. A patriotic Duke told me some weeks ago that some ships had been lost off the coast of North America in a storm. He said a thousand British sailors were drowned—not one escaped—with joy sparkling in his eyes all the time. N.B.—It was only reported, and false. But he is a fool, and so has a chance of being less a rascal than you think him from this trait. In the House of Commons it is not unusual to speak of the Provincials as *our army*. This is not general, however, and the country, though the conduct of the war is blamed, wishes it success.'

The events of the following years, and the impression produced on Sir Gilbert by the Parliamentary speeches of the leaders of opposition, worked a gradual modification of his views on the American question, while the great speech of Mr. Burke on Economic Reform, made in the first session of 1780, 'captivated' all his sympathies,' and decided him on 'taking an active part in that business.' From that time dates his friendship with Mr. Burke, which soon ripened into warm and reciprocal affection. But it was not till the spring of 1782 that he finally abandoned all hope of a favourable issue to the American war, and in so doing lost his only

motive for forbearance with an Administration generally discredited.

General Conway's motion against an offensive war with America, carried without a division, gave the deathblow to Lord North's administration, which had lasted for twelve years. Sir Gilbert had voted for General Conway's first motion of February 22—'That an address should be presented to His Majesty, imploring him to listen to the advice of his Commons, that the war might be no longer pursued for the impracticable purpose of reducing the inhabitants of the country by force.' For the second address he both spoke and voted, and from that date he considered himself a declared follower of Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke. A letter to Sir James Harris, of March 1782, and a letter to his brother Hugh, of April in the same year, give very fully the views which governed his conduct at this juncture, and in them will be found the clue to a just appreciation of the motives that actuated him throughout his political career.

Sir Gilbert Elliot to Sir James Harris.

'March, 1782.

. . . 'The grand principle of distinction and separation between parties (the American dispute) is now removed. There is at least an opportunity, therefore, for coalition, without the sacrifice of former principle on either side. That the opportunity may not be lost by the d—d intricacies of arrangements, private interests, and personal considerations, should be the prayer, morning

and evening, of every true lover of his country. *All* the ability of the country united to direct *all* the resources of the country to one good end, is a prospect which I hope is not quite out of sight; but which, I fear, both requires too much virtue, and promises too much happiness, for this latter age to look for with certainty.'

A month later, Sir Gilbert wrote to Hugh Elliot at Berlin:—

'The change in Government happened immediately after, and indeed as an immediate consequence of the American votes. A very slight consideration will account for it. . The true and fundamental cause of the removal of the late Ministry was their long and uniform want of success, and the state of despair to which the daily calamities of the country had reduced the most sanguine. This cause, although it became stronger by every day's continuance of it, yet, it might be said, might have been expected to have produced its effect much sooner; and this is true. One circumstance only prolonged the power of the Administration, which, without it, must have fallen in a much earlier period of our disgraces. It was the wish of Great Britain to recover America. Government aimed, at least, at this object, which the Opposition rejected. Those, therefore, who thought the war with America just and practicable, however much they may be dissatisfied with the abilities of the Ministers, or disgusted with their mismanagement or misfortunes, had yet no choice left them, for they were the only men left who would attempt the

recovery of the Colonies. This I take to have been the true bond between Parliament and the late Ministry, and the true key to its otherwise unaccountable longevity. For if it had had more lives than a cat, they must all have dropped some campaigns ago, if the cause I have mentioned had not preserved them. I remember when it was said Saratoga would overset them. It was afterwards foretold that, if we should be drawn into a war with France, Ministry could not stand.

'The necessity which produced the commission to America, and all the humiliating concessions which Parliament made, in a sort of panic, would have destroyed any other Government. The same may be said of the Spanish, and after it, of the Dutch war; and there is hardly a gazette during the last five or six years which would not account for a change of Government. But in fact the principles respecting America were agreeable to the people, and those of Opposition offensive to them.

'I speak this language the more confidently to you now, as you must recollect the time, and that not a very late one, when I had a strong inclination to side with those who wished for a change, and that I refrained from it only on the consideration I have just mentioned; and whether I and the rest of the nation have been wrong and foolish on the American question, either from the beginning or in its progress, is a point which the purblindness of human reason can probably never see through.

'I must own, however, that events and experience do

very strongly shake my past American opinions to their foundation; and although I could name many blunders in policy, both civil and military, and many miscarriages of mere fortune, which might perhaps have turned the scale against us, and may perhaps be sufficient to account for the utter loss of our object and the addition of many heavy calamities, yet I must also admit that the possibility of what has happened may have happened as the natural and necessary consequence of our measures, independently of blunder or accident. This is a question of mere curiosity now, so far as America is concerned, for necessity has already decided, if not our principles, at least our future conduct in regard to her. But it is perhaps a great lesson in political wisdom, applicable to other subjects, which we ought deeply to study, and which I shall study for one, without that prejudice at least which belongs to an obstinate attachment to former opinions. The moment America was out of the question Samson lost the lock of his strength, and the natural weakness of the Ministry appeared immediately. Questions of censure were rejected by very small majorities, and questions for removal ran still nearer, and could in fact have been carried if the resignation of Ministers had not preceded their dismission. . .

'The Chancellor[1] actually remains, but I am not clear that all the accession of ability which he brings can compensate for the discord which his difference of opinion with his present colleagues on their favourite measures of Reform must introduce into the Cabinet, and

[1] Thurlow.

for the appearance of weakness which a divided Government on any capital object must throw upon it.

'The change has been complete; it is generally said to have been forced on the King, and I cannot undertake to admit or deny this; but I am more apt to imagine that the resolution of Parliament respecting America was the greater violence of the two; and whatever may have been the first impressions, on dismissing old friends and servants, and receiving into his closet new and hitherto adverse men, yet there seems to me to be an impression likely to yield to more knowledge of these men, and to habits of doing business confidentially with them. You will hardly need to be told that I voted for the removal of the late Ministry. I refused however to concur in the vote of censure, to which I could not, without an impression of something disgusting to myself as well as of injustice, give my consent in the moment of their fall. I shall support the present Ministry with more cordiality, and therefore, I hope, with more exertion than I ever could the last.

'The reforms with which their Government opens, you know I formerly approved. I think this is a happy moment for gaining to the Constitution some great and valuable improvements; and I like them the better for the facility with which they may now be carried, without those convulsions which could alone have produced them as the measures of Opposition, and which naturally, and I think deservedly, gave great scandal, when they were attempted before to be forced on Parliament by the means of popular distraction, during a war which rendered all distractions fatal.'

Lord Rockingham's ministry, formed in March, terminated with the death of its chief in July; and a day or two later Sir Gilbert wrote to his wife as follows,[1] after dining with Burke at the Spring Garden Coffee-House:—

'Burke is overcome by the loss of his friend, and in a day or two will, I hope, be able to cry and relieve himself. I fear it is too certain Lord S. will be First Lord of the Treasury.' Two days later he wrote:—'Lord Shelburne is appointed; Fox has resigned; Lord J. Cavendish, Montagu, Lord Althorp, I believe all the Admiralty, Burke, and several others too tedious to mention, resign with him.[2] William Pitt has the offer of Chancellor of the Exchequer or Secretary of State. . . . There is one general confusion. The House filled to-day soon after three o'clock, and sat waiting till half after four, without uttering a word, for a commission to pass bills in the House of Lords. As soon as the Speaker returned we expected that the fun would begin, and that we should hear the reasons for some of going out, and for others of staying or going in. General Con-

[1] Lady Elliot had left London a short time before, not without jibes at her husband's love of the town, to which he answered: 'I love *my* country as you love *the* country.'

[2] On July 5, Sir Gilbert wrote to Hugh Elliot at Berlin:—'With the opinion they (Lord J. Cavendish, Fox, Burke, etc.) entertain of Lord Shelburne's character, they could do no otherwise with dignity or credit; for myself, my choice between the two is easily made. My opinion has been, since the American war was over, that the country looked to the abilities of Mr. Fox, and the high character of his and Lord Rockingham's friends, for their salvation. I know little personally of Lord Shelburne, or of his immediate retainers, Dunning, Barré, and Alderman Townshend, but the little I do know, added to the voice of the world, is decisive with me.'—*Memoirs of Hugh Elliot.*

way rose, and we pricked up our ears. General Conway moved that the House adjourn till Tuesday. The Speaker put the question, and we all looked like fools —gallery and all. It was merely accidental, for I believe Fox and several others intended to say something if the popping of the question had not unexpectedly taken place.' . . .

'July 8, 1782.

. . . 'The arrangements are not yet finished. . . . As for myself, I have declared myself to Charles Fox, and dine with him to-morrow for my pains. I am thoroughly satisfied with my choice, and am sure I have done right, not for myself and children, but for the sake of my precious soul and my poor country. I have a letter from poor Hugh. It would make a heart of stone bleed; for it proves that he is still in love with his wife, which is hardly credible, though true. Pity 'tis, 'tis true. He pleads hard for her.'

'St. James's Street: July 10, 1782.

. . . 'Yesterday's debate was very satisfactory to me. The superior merits of those who have resigned and of those who have not were fully discussed, and I had the pleasure of hearing my first opinion fully justified and confirmed by the debate. General Conway, Tommy Townshend, and James Grenville looked silly, ashamed, and unhappy. Lord Shelburne was treated by those who oppose him as they thought he deserved; and although his own friends could justify themselves only by commending him, not a man was found to say they

thought well of him. They were challenged to do so, but none ventured it. . . . I found on my return home last night a note from Lord Shelburne desiring to see me to-day. I went, and he bestowed, in the most profuse manner, on me, flattery, promises, and entreaties for support. I will not undertake the whole of the conversation at present, but will endeavour to set some part of it on paper when I am more at leisure. The object was, as I tell you, to gain me, and the result was an explicit declaration, on my part, of my preference for his opponents, and my determination not to join him. I have had the pleasure of refusing offers, which I have no doubt I could at this moment have made effectual, for the sake of my opinions.' [1]

'July 11, 1782.

'Parliament was prorogued to-day.

'I congratulate you on Pepper Arden's being Solicitor-General. Barré is Paymaster. There is a Mr. Salt in the House. Dudley Long said that he should be Attorney-General since Pepper was to be Solicitor, as they were to have a *devil* of an administration.

'I spent an hour this morning with Lord Mansfield

[1] Lord Shelburne's impressions of Sir Gilbert Elliot are preserved in the following extract from a letter to Sir J. Harris, published in the Memoirs of the Earl of Malmesbury:—'You sent your letter to me by Sir Gilbert Elliot, whose good manners and good sense captivated me. I do not like to separate any person from his habits, but I was very sorry to find in him such as are likely to connect him with an Opposition which stands on no public ground whatever.'—*Letter from Lord Shelburne to Sir J. Harris, July* 27, 1782.

at Caen Wood on Penitentiary business, and then spent as much in Newgate, where I saw eleven poor creatures under sentence of death at prayers in the chapel; one woman amongst them. I believe I looked more like a man going to be hanged than any of them. Some were not there, being chained to the floor of their cells. The turnkey wanted very much to show me one poor innocent lad, as he called him, in the same situation, but I declined it. I asked the turnkey what his crime was, and he said a footpad robbery—poor innocent lad!'

A day or two later Sir Gilbert set out for Scotland, with nine folio Reports of Committees in the chaise with him, 'besides the first volume of the *Théâtre d'Éducation*, and two volumes of a *Théâtre de la Société*. I bring also the new novel by the author of "Evelina," so that I am safe from my own reflections for the rest of the journey.'

Before the month of July came to an end, Sir Gilbert left the 'green beauty of Minto' to visit his relatives in Edinburgh. On this occasion Lady Elliot perhaps gave credit to the opening sentence of the following letter:—

'Edinburgh: July 25, 1782.

. . . 'I am *sick of this odious town*, do you believe me for once. All I can say is that I did not go to the assembly last night, and that I am not gone to the race to-day. I dined yesterday at Sir John Dalrymple Hamilton Macgill's, to meet Sir Grey Cooper, who

drank claret and eat flummery till any other stomach would have been turned. At least mine was, although I only had a share in the claret. A great man is a great creature at Edinburgh, but of all great men the greatest by many degrees is a Secretary to the Treasury; but, remember, this is for your private ear. . . . I have found one just man in Gomorrah—Adam Smith, author of the "Wealth of Nations." He was the Duke of Buccleuch's tutor, is a wise and deep philosopher, and although made commissioner of the customs here by the Duke and Lord Advocate, is what I call an *honest fellow*. He wrote a most kind as well as elegant letter to Burke on his resignation, as I believe I told you before; and on my mentioning it to him, he told me he was the only man here who spoke out for the Rockinghams. What I say of the Duke and Lord Advocate is not from any coolness towards them, but from the notion of their joining Lord Shelburne. . . . I sat next Dr. Blair at dinner. They talked of his sermons. Sir Grey said his Caroline had read every word of them aloud to the family, twice through, last winter. Sir John Dalrymple asked on this whether Sir Grey had observed the passage in which Dr. Blair has, without knowing it, drawn his own character; and on being asked by Sir Grey which was the passage, Sir John answered, it was in his sermon on Gentleness, where he draws the picture of a gentleman. So you see you had mistaken the man. Blair is really a good man as well as preacher, but is not insensible to flattery, and stood the trowel with

fortitude and resignation. . . . Lady Sutherland[1] is the principal figure in the group. Campbell is on duty, and is supposed by many to be successful. The Coopers are not indifferent spectators, and do what they can for their absent principal. Hugh Scott shoves himself in for a dance or so, and Mr. Scott of Harden spares no assiduity with grandmamma. . . . Lady Wallace is as entertaining as ever, but is two years older. The Duchess of Hamilton[2] against the field in my mind. There is nothing more perfectly like a gentlewoman than herself.'

'Edinburgh: July 28, 1782.

'"Populous cities please me best, and the busy hum of men." . . . I have been asked by Lady Alva[3] to dance with Lady Sutherland, by way of a bugaboo to keep off others; but I preferred war's alarum. I have been at the camp two days; and at the Bass catching solan geese.'

From Edinburgh Sir Gilbert proceeded to visit his property in Fife and Angus, and while so doing he caught a severe cold, which was followed by symptoms sufficiently alarming to make an immediate journey to

[1] Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland in her own right, married 1785 to the Marquis of Stafford, created 1833 Duke of Sutherland.

[2] Elizabeth Anna, daughter of Peter Burrell, Esq., married to the eighth Duke of Hamilton. The marriage was dissolved in 1794.

[3] Lady Alva, wife of Charles Erskine of Tinwald and Alva, a Lord of Session and Lord Justice-Clerk; by a previous marriage with William Maxwell, Esq. of Prestoun, she was the maternal grandmother of Lady Sutherland.

the south of Europe a matter of necessity, in spite of the condition of Lady Elliot, who was on the eve of her first confinement—which actually took place at Lyons.[1] 'Maria, as usual,' he wrote to his brother, 'has behaved incomparably;' and a very few days after the medical opinion had been given that decided them on so immediate a step, they were on their road to the South accompanied by a physician.

A winter spent at Nice after the lizard-like fashion of travellers from the North—basking all day on the rocks, exploring the coast, and doing nothing more laborious than was required to move from one spot of beauty to another—restored Sir Gilbert's health. They returned home in 1783 by Switzerland, whence he wrote, that, had a man no other ties, Switzerland must certainly be his chosen home—a sentiment in which some of his descendants will agree. Summer found them again in London. The Coalition Government in the meanwhile had come into office, Mr. Fox's India Bill was in contemplation, and Sir Gilbert was given to understand that in the event of its being carried he would be one of the seven parliamentary directors who were to be appointed under its provisions.

Writing to his wife at Moccas from London, 20th August 1783, he says: 'I breakfasted to-day with Mr. Burke at Mr. Fox's, and we had a couple of hours' conversation; but a couple of days would not exhaust Burke. Everything is very much afloat.'

[1] Gilbert Elliot, second Earl of Minto, was born at Lyons on November 15, 1782. Died July 1859.

Lady Elliot returned to London a few days later, and her husband found no further occasion to write to her till the autumn, when she accompanied Lady Harris to Bath; while there she received from him the following account of the renewal of his early friendship with Mirabeau:—

Sir Gilbert Elliot to Lady Elliot at Bath.

'Lincoln's Inn: November 19, 1783.

'I have been all this morning with Mirabeau, whom I found as little altered either in looks or manner as possible in twenty years.[1] He is an ardent friend, and I believe a sincere one, and I confess I have great pleasure in seeing him again. His present dependence is on his pen. He is a very eloquent writer, but an English pen is but a bad provider in London, and the best French one must be still worse. The lady is "not his wife,[2] but not the less a modest, gentle, and vir-

[1] To Hugh Elliot Sir Gilbert wrote: 'Mirabeau, though considerably ripened in abilities . . . is as overbearing in his conversation, as awkward in his graces, as ugly and misshapen in face and person, and withal as perfectly *suffisant*, as we remember him twenty years ago at school. I loved him then, however, and so did you, though, as he confesses, you sometimes quarrelled with him, being always somewhat less patient in admitting extreme pretensions than I.'

[2] In a previous letter Sir Gilbert had mentioned his having failed to find Mirabeau at home, but says that he saw 'the Countess, though to tell you the truth, I am not sure whether she is his wife or another man's.' She was neither the one nor the other, but is known in the memoirs of Mirabeau as Madame de Nehra, which name was an anagram of her own.

Mirabeau remained in England until the spring of 1785. In a letter, dated February 1785, to Madame de Nehra at Paris, he takes great credit to himself for having remained in London when *the plague* was

tuous woman." She is daughter of a gentleman of the Equestrian order in Holland; I forget his name, but he was a distinguished man of the popular party. He died poor, and the republic, like other countries, thinks it right that patriots and their families should starve for the good of their souls, *et pour encourager les autres.* The daughter, being handsome and destitute, "very fortunately escaped the snares of such circumstances by falling into the hands of an honest man." This is my friend's story. She has the merit of fidelity to one of the ugliest and most unfortunate dogs in Europe: and, being a gentlewoman, has not the manners of her condition, which, if Mirabeau is to be trusted, is however as good and as sacred a marriage as any formality could make it. Mirabeau was married young to a great match, but has been long legally separated from his wife, though the French purity on these points does not allow another marriage.'

When Sir Gilbert joined his family at Bath he took Mirabeau with him, but the visit was not a success:— 'He made such hasty love to Harriet, whom he had little doubt of subduing in a week, and so totally silenced my John Bull wife, who understands a Frenchman no better than Molly housemaid, and so scared my little boy with caressing him, so completely disposed of me from breakfast to supper, and so astonished all our friends, that I could hardly keep

reported to be there, in order to share the dangers of his friend Sir Gilbert. The whole story is so characteristic of the writer that it is given in an appendix.

the peace in his favour.' And when, some months later, Mirabeau proposed to join the Elliots at Minto, the impression of this visit was still so strong that Lady Elliot insisted on two rooms being prepared for him at the game-keeper's, as she said no power on earth should induce her to admit him under her roof.

Mr. Fox had introduced his bill for the better administration of India to the House of Commons on the day before the preceding letter was written. On the 17th of December it reached the House of Lords, and on the following day the Coalition Ministry was dismissed and a new Ministry appointed. Sir Gilbert, a few days after this (December 1783), wrote to his brother Hugh:—

Sir Gilbert Elliot to Hugh Elliot.

'I have not time to enter fully on the inexplicable events of the past week. . . . The East India bill passed through the House of Commons with unusual majorities of the House and applause of the public; especially considering the variety of powerful interests it had to grapple with, and the popularity of the topics which were opposed to it. The King had seen it in all its stages, and encouraged his ministers to proceed, without, however, any express or explicit approbation of it. The House of Lords on the canvass had pledged a majority of almost 2 to 1 in its favour, when Lord Temple, after an audience with the King, circulated to the peers an intimation that the King had given him authority to declare that he was against the bill, and

that he should consider those who should vote for it not only not his friends but his enemies. This had its effect. The lords of the bedchamber, most of the bishops, and other shabby peers, came round; and in a word, by these means, and these means alone, a majority of 18 was obtained against the bill, which was thrown out. The House of Commons came to a strong vote of censure on the person who propagated these reports, and resolved that whoever should advise the King to dissolve Parliament was an enemy to his country. These resolutions passed with the usual majorities of 2 to 1. Notwithstanding these measures, Mr. Pitt, Lord Temple, Lord Gower, accepted offices of First Lord of the Treasury, Chancellor of Exchequer, Secretary of State, and President of the Council. It was concluded of course that, desperate as the attempt seemed, yet a dissolution of Parliament must be their intent—being their only forlorn hope with the present House of Commons inveterate against them. Such certainly must have been their intention. Accordingly, all the world prepared for a general election. . . . Yesterday, to my surprise, Lord Temple resigned, and we were assured there should be no dissolution. We concluded of course that all was at an end, and that this boyish freak was already over; for how was Mr. Pitt, without even Lord Temple, and rejected by all his friends, to carry on government for a week in a House of Commons which both detested and laughed at him? This seemed pretty sound reasoning, yet to-day a complete arrangement of sorts and scraps is out. . . .

'The only possible explanation is that they mean to gain a few days' time, and to wear some sort of countenance in order to make a capitulation if it can be obtained. They have taken a first step without at all knowing what the second was to be, the second without the third, and so on. They have lost all character, and are considered as a set of children playing at ministers, and must be sent back to school, and in a few days all will have returned to its former course.'

How these predictions, very general at the time, were fulfilled, is well known. The minister who was to go back to school remained in office for eighteen years, and his opponents had had time to grow weary of opposition before he ceased to be master of the situation.

On the 25th of March 1784 Parliament was dissolved, and Sir Gilbert was one of the many who, as supporters of the late administration, found themselves deprived of their seats 'by the junction of local parties, animated by a strong distaste to the Coalition.' Sixty M.P.'s are said to have been unseated at this time. On the 26th Mr. Burke wrote the following letter to Sir Gilbert, whose prospects in Roxburghshire were hopeless:—

'Charles Street: Friday, March 26, 1784.

'My dear Sir,—I only came to town to-day, and did not receive your letter until six this evening. I am sorry for the prospect it presents, as much so as I think I could be for the failure of any friend I have in the world. There is indeed a great slaughter of that de-

scription, but still the heads of the party seem in great heart. I went to Fox as soon as I could, and found him in the midst of a great room surrounded with the reporters of this day's canvass. Surely a leader in party ought never to represent such a place, especially at a general election, when he ought to be at leisure to turn his eye to every quarter. He assures me that he will do his very best to serve you, though he has had already many vexatious disappointments. My dear friend, stand stout. Do your best. Something or other will happen by-and-by. You have that grand advantage of youth. It is apt to be undervalued by those who possess it, like every other advantage. But it does wonders in the distempers of fortune, as it does in those of body. Adieu !—Believe me ever your affectionate and faithful humble servant,

'EDMUND BURKE.'

That Sir Gilbert resigned himself with much philosophy to his temporary exclusion from public life is apparent in the following letter to his brother Hugh, written after the arrival in England of Hugh's private secretary, Mr. Johnston, who had brought home the details of the late crisis in Denmark :—

Sir Gilbert Elliot to Hugh Elliot.

'Cuffnals: October 9, 1784.

'My dear Brother,—I was made very happy by the arrival of Mr. Johnston, for whom it is impossible not

to conceive an affection at first sight. . . . The account he has given me of your situation and prospects is more comfortable than I think at any past period for many years back.

'The settlement of your domestic troubles I never think of without joy; and I have still more satisfaction now than when those events were recent, in the hope that your mind has subsided to a calmness and tranquillity on that subject, which are not attainable either during the conflict or immediately after such a storm. Your little girl is a treasure, which I know better how to appreciate than I did. You are engaged in important business, and execute it with distinction. Johnston insists on it that your attention is fixed on a prudent management of your own affairs, as well as on an active discharge of your public duties; and on this I build with pleasure a great confidence in the realisation of more agreeable prospects. That part of life to which we are coming ought to be made smoother than what we have passed; for we neither shall have the same activity to make our way good over flints and brambles, nor the same spirits to support cheerfully the bruises and scratches which we cannot avoid.

'I shall be happy, therefore, my dear Hugh, to see you fairly a man of this world; which is not only consistent with honour, generosity, and the whole class of *les vertus nobles*, but perhaps inseparable from these qualities rightly understood. Health is the first point of all. Johnston says you are much better than you have been, but I own I think climate an essential to a

constitution which has been so much impaired as yours, and this should be one of the objects most steadily kept in view. You know the absolute *nullity* to which my assistance in any public pursuit is reduced. I feel a personal comfort in the leisure and tranquillity of this situation, which I think rational, though it may be suspected of some proportion of indolence by others who know that defect in my temper and constitution. Perhaps my reason and my humour may both contribute to the satisfaction I find in circumstances which, without either of these aids, might possibly have been extremely irksome, though unavoidable. In considering, therefore, *my single self*, I have discovered that good is come out of evil, and that, whatever may be the chances of my future life, I shall be happy enough to play on velvet, since my temper, and I will have it my judgment too, have made a good hedge to my ambition, at least to the only ambition I ever shall throw for. But when I consider others—that is, one or two others, of whom you are the first—I am disposed to wish for a little more significance than I am likely to attain. Yet I am happy to think that in the present situation of things you promise to have a better foundation for success in any reasonable object in your own acknowledged merits, than you could have in any other man's assistance. . . . I told Johnston, and I believe he has told you, that I heard from Harris that your conduct is highly approved of. He spoke in strong terms of approbation himself of your later despatches; and he observed (in character, I confess) that you do not take

merit enough to yourself—not so much as you are strictly entitled to. I believe Lord Carmarthen retains, from early acquaintance, a great degree of personal favour towards you. Of myself, I have to tell you that my health is confirmed to a degree of soundness which leaves no room for uneasiness on that account. We passed three months at Swanage, where I bathed and sailed for health and pleasure. We are now at a house in the New Forest, which Harris took some time ago for three years before his embassy to the Hague was in agitation. If you are desirous of sending your little girl to England, we shall be happy to be trusted with her. Maria joins heartily in this offer, and I must say it is impossible you should put her in such good hands —you will not suspect me of meaning mine. For myself, I can only promise most hearty affection; and since you are sometimes in bad spirits about your own health and situation, it may be a satisfaction to you to be assured that your daughter can never, in any circumstances, while I live, want a home or parents. While both you and I live she has therefore two strings to her bow, neither of which, I hope, is likely to break soon. . . . God bless you, my dear Hugh !—and believe me, your most affectionate,

G. E.'

While at Swanage Sir Gilbert had received a pleasant congratulatory note on the birth of his second son from Mr. Burke.

'Beconsfield: August 1784.

'My dear Sir,—I wish you joy of the young gentleman who is come to visit this strange world.[1] I daresay he thinks it but an odd kind of a place, though, like other polite travellers, he is too well bred to tell us so in direct terms. Well, I hope he will live to see it mended, and that one of the first things he will have to see and to learn from, is the share his father is to have in that reformation.' So wash away, like a brave fellow, and obtain a Neptunian constitution fit for the work you have in hand. I know you love world-making —why not world-mending and repairing. The first, I admit, is a noble theory; but a cobbler is of some use in political society. . . . Mrs. Burke joins her best congratulations with mine to Lady Elliot on the arrival of the new guest. We are really much interested in whatever concerns the happiness of you both. . . . I need not go to the sea—it has come to us. We have a deluge of rain, and the corn looks deplorably. The land suffers much. As to your neighbouring element, a little more or less makes no difference. All this rain, were it twenty times more, will not lodge the seaweed, or give the rot to a flock of John Dorys. God bless you!—and believe me, in all weathers and in all humours, most truly yours,

EDM. BURKE.'

The Elliots spent the winter of '84 and the spring of '85 in London, in a house in Park Street, which ad-

[1] Hon. George Elliot, admiral, K.C.B., born August 1, 1784, died 1863.

joined that of Lord Palmerston.[1] The two families were on terms of the most cordial intimacy; and when Lady Elliot, after her husband's loss of his seat in the House of Commons, first broached her intention of returning to Minto to remain there through the winter of '86, Lady Palmerston loudly protested against so unheard-of an arrangement:—'Tell her,' she wrote, 'that it is a most unkind resolution. Park Street will lose every charm without her. I shall never open my window, which will remind me of all our pleasant tête-à-têtes." And Lady Harris was still more aggrieved, especially as she declared that Maria had just come out as a 'beauty,' and should not thus tear herself from an admiring world. Her picture, painted by Sir Joshua at this time, shows if not a regularly pretty, at least a very bright and intelligent face.

Sir Gilbert remained in London after his wife's departure to Minto, to receive his brother Hugh, who returned at the end of June on leave from Denmark, where he had played a very successful and generally approved part;[2] and a letter to Lady Elliot at Minto records Hugh's flattering reception by the King.

[1] Henry, second Viscount Palmerston, married,—1st, Frances, only daughter of Sir Francis Poole, Bart., who died 1769; and 2ndly, January 5, 1783, Mary, daughter of Benjamin Mee, Esq.

[2] A change of government amounting to a revolution in the political affairs of Denmark, had afforded to Mr. Elliot an opportunity to display his well-known spirit and determination in a moment of crisis, and to establish confidential relations with the Danish statesman, Count Bernstorff.

'Park Street: July 1, 1785.

'Hugh has had his audience last Wednesday, and was extremely pleased with his reception. It lasted almost two hours, was full, confidential, and, he says, satisfactory as to the business, and as to himself kind and friendly in the highest degree. You know it had been always said by *some* before his arrival that he was highly approved of, and favoured by everybody except the King, who was represented as having strong prejudices against him. The very reverse of which is certainly the truth. The degree of uneasiness and jealousy which his presence occasions, you know where, would be entertaining if I did not think it always dangerous.'

Sir Gilbert rejoined his wife in the course of July, and no further letters passed between them till the month of December, when he paid a hurried visit to London, and wrote to her such scraps of gossip as could be picked up during 'a half-hour's sitting at Lady Palmerston's toilet. Her Harry[1] is much improved, and is a fine, eager, lively, good-humoured boy. She says the report is that Mrs. Fitzherbert is, or is to be, at Carlton House; that she was married by a Roman Catholic priest; is to have 6,000*l.* a year, and is to be created a Duchess.'

[1] Henry, third and last Viscount Palmerston. Two months before, Lady Palmerston had written an account to Minto of the celebration of her son and heir's christening with great magnificence. Mara took part in a concert, followed by a ball. Lord Palmerston chose Winchester for the place of performance rather than Broadlands, as more convenient to the country in general.

Though the year '85 was productive of but few letters between the husband and wife, it brought them, while together, many pleasant ones from distant friends; in a kindly note from Mr. Burke, written after visiting Minto in the enforced absence of Sir Gilbert, detained by legal business in Edinburgh, we catch the first rumblings of the thunder-storm so soon to break on the heads of the Indian 'wild beasts.'

'Beconsfield: October 20, 1785.

'My dear Friend,—I had much to satisfy me in Scotland, but I felt a void on quitting it. It was unlucky that we should have missed you at Edinburgh. At Minto[1] we did not expect to find you, and Lady Elliot and Lady Harris contrived matters so that we did but just feel you were not there. We saw you in your portrait. I really think Lady Harris's parallel of the place and the master to be not only perfectly just but new in

[1] This visit of Mr. Burke's to Minto must have been a second one in the same year, for Dr. Somerville (minister of Jedburgh) mentions in his Memoirs having met him there with his son and Mr. Windham in the summer of 1783, when Sir Gilbert was himself at home. The cause of Burke's visit to Scotland was his re-election to the Rectorship of the University of Glasgow, to which he had been first elected in 1783. Dr. Somerville gives a very amusing account of the days he spent in the company of Mr. Burke at Minto, of the fire and brilliancy of his conversation, and the universality of his knowledge, of his somewhat exclusive partiality for the Episcopalian form of church government,—of the 'contemptuous and disparaging terms in which he expressed himself of the Americans whom he had so often eulogised in Parliament,' and of his enthusiasm for the character of Washington, whose praises, he adds, were little to the taste of ex-Governor Elliot, and of the Admiral his brother, both being among the guests at Minto.

the thought, and exceedingly neat and elegant. Since I got hither I have done nothing at all, and thought very little. I have seen very few. Windham has been ailing.

'I have just returned from London, where I stayed two days. I found Lady Harris had just departed. The town seems as complete a desert as ever I have known it. It did not appear to me to be the less so because a number of wild beasts from India were prowling about. The hotel in which I lodged was full of them. Among others, Johnson, the principal ravager of Oude. The Board of Control, the keepers of the menagerie, have now outdone their outdoings, by sending out, contrary to the remonstrances even of the directors, a strict order (October 20) to the whole line of service not to write a word concerning any public matter to any individual whatsoever, themselves excepted, on pain of being instantly dismissed the service. They have now completed the edifice. I heard about a week ago from your friend Dick Burke,[1] from Paris. He had left this but a day or two before my arrival. Four days he spent in Holy Island, and sailing from thence, they beat about for six days on the coast of England, until, finding the time he had allotted himself for Holland expired, or nearly so, and the wind proving unfavourable, he was put ashore on the coast of Norfolk. Mrs. Burke's most

[1] Richard Burke, brother of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, immortalised in Goldsmith's poem of *Retaliation*, one of the wittiest and most graceful *jeux d'esprit* in the English language.

cordial compliments, with mine, to Lady Elliot.—Ever, my dear sir, your most obliged faithful

'EDM. BURKE.

'I am going to see the remains of my potato-mine dug up.'

The very next letter Mr. Burke wrote to Sir Gilbert related to the public prosecution of Warren Hastings, for his conduct as Governor-General of India, which was commenced in February of 1786, by Mr. Burke, who moved for copies of the correspondence which had passed between Hastings and the directors in 1782, and for other papers.

The history of Warren Hastings' administration of India, and of his subsequent impeachment and trial, is too well known to need repetition. Every schoolboy, however much he may fall short of the knowledge ascribed to him by Lord Macaulay, has read that brilliant writer's essay on Warren Hastings, has blushed over his account of the Rohilla war, when a high-spirited nation was sold for forty lacs; has resented the wrongs inflicted on the helpless royal family of Oude, and the tragic fate of Nuncomar; has felt his wrath appeased by the wonderful description—a Paul Veronese in words—of the day of retribution; and has learned at last to pity the delinquent whose trial for years 'dragged its slow length along,' and whose offences were atoned for by the humiliations, bitternesses, and disappointments which pursued him to the decline of life.

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At the time when the prosecution commenced, 'the general aspect of affairs,' says Lord Macaulay, 'was favourable to Hastings. The King was on his side. The Company and its servants were zealous in his cause. Among public men he had many ardent friends. Such were Lord Mansfield. . . . and Lord Lansdowne. . . . The ministers were generally believed to be favourable to the late Governor-General; the Lord Chancellor[1] in particular . . . espoused the cause of Hastings with indecent violence. Pitt, though he had censured many parts of the Indian system, had studiously abstained from saying a word against the late chief of the Indian government. . . . Mr. Dundas'[2] (who had moved the resolution of censure, which still remained on the journals of the House) 'was the only important member of the administration who was committed to a different view of the subject.'

On the 20th of February Mr. Burke wrote to Sir Gilbert as follows:—

'No. 45 Pall Mall: February 20, 1786.

'My dear Friend,—Hitherto all goes reasonably well. The ministers in the House of Commons wish to make an Hastings of their own. Those of the House of Lords are content with the old one. The former have embarrassed themselves considerably, and they are sensible of it; but between the fear of their adversaries in the Cabinet prevailing on one side, or of their adversaries

[1] Thurlow.
[2] Right Hon. Henry Dundas, first Lord Melville.

in the House prevailing on the other, they have suffered us to get the most of the papers, and now I think we shall go on powerfully. I felt myself, from the beginning of this affair, in great peril as to my reputation. There was a run against me within and without doors, and a universal circulation that I had nothing to produce. The whole is to me providential, and I ought to be sincerely thankful. Mrs. Burke is come to town. I want much to see you this morning.

Ever truly yours,

EDM. BURKE.'

On the 4th of April Mr. Burke made a charge against Hastings of 'sundry high crimes and misdemeanours,' and delivered the first nine articles of the charge; the rest, amounting in the whole to twenty-two, being presented in the following week.

On the 1st of June Mr. Burke brought forward his accusation on the Rohilla war, which was rejected by a majority of 119 to 67.

To the friends of Hastings this must have seemed a decisive victory, as the House had formerly passed a resolution condemning the policy followed by Hastings with regard to Rohilkund; nevertheless, when, thirteen days later (13th June), the charge respecting the treatment of the Rajah of Benares was opened by Mr. Fox, 119 votes against 79 declared that 'there was matter of impeachment,'—Mr. Pitt, to the amazement of the House, voting with the majority.

On the 15th, Sir Gilbert, who had lately arrived in

London, wrote to his wife the news of this unexpected triumph.

'Park Street: June 15, 1786.

. . . 'Our victory on the Benares charge has given me the greatest satisfaction and comfort. It will not lead to anything in a party view, and may perhaps lead to little good even in India. This particular vote is forced by the power of truth, and will probably not carry such unwilling converts much farther. But it is a most comfortable testimony to the general justice of the prosecution, and a shield to the characters and reputation of the prosecutors. It has saved, besides, the House of Commons from the disgrace of approving another villany. Dundas voted in the majority, though the papers' this morning say not. So did Jenkinson,[1] and Sir G. Howard, who is accounted particularly a King's vote; but Powney—who is called, you know, the King's member, as he is brought in for Windsor by the King's interest with his neighbours there—voted for Hastings. Since this vote Major Scott[2] has presented the King with a diamond of immense value, as from one of the Indian princes. It has been in England above a year, but was not brought forth till now, and is the subject of much conversation. . . .

'I dined yesterday, where do you think? Only with the maids of honour and bedchamber women. There

[1] Sir Charles Jenkinson, Bart., created in 1786 Baron Hawkesbury and in 1796 Earl of Liverpool. Died 1808.

[2] Major Scott was considered to be the organ of Hastings in the House of Commons.

was Mrs. Herbert, and the Gunnings, to whom I belonged, Miss Tryon, Miss Boscawen, Miss Vernon, Lady Di Fleming, and Miss Finch, with a Mr. and Mrs. Boscawen, just married. I never was in so large a company of maidens before, and I went not without some alarm; but it proved less formidable than one could suppose. They were, as it happened that day, very tolerably civil to each other. I was neither much entertained nor much bored. I was curious to see the thing once, which will probably do for life. I then went to Mrs. Herbert's apartments to tea, and we had the Castles, Pitts, Robinson, Harris, Miss Damer, the Gunnings, and Lady Louisa Stuart, and not a male but myself except Cholmondeley, who was there half-an-hour. You see I do not stint myself in number and quality in your absence.'

'Wednesday, June 21, 1786.

'I went, the night before last, to Ranelagh, from Mrs. Legge's[1] with Lord and Lady Hambden and Mrs. Davenport. Lady Palmerston brought me home. It was very thin, and as little fatiguing therefore as it could be; but I was extremely tired, and very little amused, notwithstanding the number of your rivals there, as the Pitts, Gunnings, Palmerstons, etc. The Prince of Wales shook me by the hand very cordially, as an old acquaintance whom he had not seen for a great while, and asked *tenderly* after you. I dined yesterday

[1] Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Philip Musgrave, Bart., wife of Heneage Legge, Esq.

at Lord Palmerston's with the Hambdens and Harry Pelham.[1] He and Lady Poole go on in the old swaining and inseparable and boring way. Lady Poole is far from well. . . . Cagliostro[2] was in London, at Hugh's hotel, a few days ago, and I believe is there still. If so, I shall take a look at him, which will satisfy me perfectly. There is a talk of a difference in the cabinet, and of a doubt whether Mr. Pitt may not resign. The reason talked of is, Mr. Jenkinson's peerage and coming into the cabinet, which Pitt opposes, and is supposed to be made a point of by the King. I do not know that there is any truth in this, except that some little stir among them there certainly is.'

'Monday, June 26, 1786.

'There is no end to pleasuring and water-parties next door. You know I went with Mr. Gally, Le Chevalier de Revel, and Mundy, on Friday, to Greenwich; and on Saturday to Dagenham Breach with the Palmerstons, Mrs. Crewe, Molly Carter, Windham, Harry Pelham,

[1] Second son of Thomas Lord Pelham.

[2] Cagliostro, whose real name was Joseph Balsamo, was a celebrated adventurer, who, in the last half of the eighteenth century, made his appearance in most of the courts of Europe, exciting general curiosity by his striking appearance, the universality of his accomplishments, his knowledge of chemistry, and his pretensions to an intimate acquaintance with the black art. Having been mixed up in the affair of the diamond necklace with the Prince de Rohan and Madame de la Motte, he was thrown into the Bastille, and being subsequently exiled, he came to England in 1786. He was tried at Rome in 1790 for the offence of 'practising Free Masonry,' and was condemned to death, but the sentence was commuted into one of perpetual imprisonment. He died in 1795.

Cholmondeley, and W. Payne. Sir J. Banks met us there, and did the honours of the house, which belongs to a fishing-club of which he is a member. . . . I am going, sore against my will, to-day, to dine at Brentford Court with the Palmerstons; nobody of the party but them, Lady Poole, and Harry Pelham. They are gone by water, but I have positively refused that, as it would have consumed my whole morning, and delayed my business. . . . Lord Palmerston has not got to his second childhood, but only as far as his second boyhood; for no schoolboy is so fond of a breaking-up as he is of a junket and pleasuring. I am to carry Revel to Lady Palmerston at Richmond on Wednesday. . . .'

'June 27, 1786.

'I saw young Elliot[1] of Wells yesterday, and was extremely pleased with him. He is most entirely

[1] The Right Hon. William Elliot, son of John Elliot of Wells in Roxburghshire (and nephew of Colonel Elliot, a distinguished military officer, who married a daughter and co-heiress of Henry d'Albuquerque, first Earl of Grantham); was made a Privy Councillor and Secretary for Ireland in 1795. Died at Minto in 1818. He was a man of sound understanding and cultivated tastes. He lived in great intimacy with Burke, Windham, and other leading men of his day, though he was comparatively but little known in general society, owing to the shy and silent habits, which together with his appearance procured him in Ireland the playful sobriquet of the 'Castle Spectre,' a name altered by the Irish wits to the 'Revenant,' when in 1806 he returned to Ireland as chief secretary with John Duke of Bedford. To him was addressed Burke's celebrated letter on a speech made by the Duke of Bedford in the House of Lords. At the death of Mrs. Burke in 1811, he found himself, by her last will, associated with Lord Fitzwilliam and Dr. Walker King, Bishop of Rochester, in the charge of Burke's manuscripts.

warmly with us in politics. I mean London politics—of course in county politics if necessary; and he is very sensible, modest, and agreeable in his manner. Perhaps you may not think him lively enough when you know him. . . He seems serious in his intentions of following the law, which he is now studying diligently. I am sure I shall advise him to stick to it, unless he can settle as a laird of Wells, for I can tell him a laird without a profession in the world is a bad trade.'

'Saturday, July 1, 1786.

'I dined yesterday at Wimbledon with Wilberforce. I took Revel there. We had Windham,[1] Romilly,[2] Baynes, St. John, and Lord Mulgrave; a very pleasant dinner, and walk in the fields after it. Wilberforce is an extremely pleasant clever man, professing a great deal of principle, and much more attention to decency and religion than is common. I do not know whether this unusual quality does not now-a-days always raise a degree of suspicion of cant, especially when united with very unprincipled actions, such as are many that Wilberforce has certainly committed in his public life. And what leads me perhaps more than another to distrust this sort of profession is an *example* I have studied closely, and who I fear would pass on the world, and even perhaps on himself, this sort of cheap and ceremonious virtue as a substitute for real practical probity

[1] Right Hon. William Windham.
[2] Afterwards Sir Samuel Romilly.

and honour. I have, however, no right to conclude this of Wilberforce, and he is rather in favour with me for his late Indian votes, and for having been supposed to be instrumental in bringing Pitt to do one right thing on that subject. I have also to commend him for taking the penitentiary houses under his protection. . . I was at the play the day before yesterday with Lady Palmerston, and saw the "Fatal Curiosity," a horrid bloody tragedy of Lillo, where an old father and mother murder their son, without knowing him, for his diamonds; when the son delivered the little box of jewels to his mother, there was a buzz run about the whole house of a *bulse*, a *bulse*.[1] This story of Hastings' diamond seems to have made a proper impression; and Major Scott's last speech, with the letter from Hastings to himself on the occasion, seems to leave hardly any doubt that the diamond was really the property of Hastings himself, and of course meant as a bribe to the King, who has pocketed the affront. Hastings admits in that letter that he only *guess'd* it was intended for the King, and therefore he admits that it *might perhaps* be his own. Query, whether anybody would part with such a treasure without *knowing with certainty* that it did not belong to themselves? This letter is clearly fabricated for the public, for Hastings had no occasion to write all this long formal justificatory letter to Scott, whom he saw every day.

[1] A *bulse* is a bag or case of diamonds. 'They are always brought home from India in a case which is called a Bulse.' From the *Political Magazine*, x. 478.

Old Pulteney has just *been refused* by Miss Colmore, that pretty girl you know who has come out lately, a beauty like you. I go to-morrow to Beconsfield, and return on Monday.'

'Park Street: July 4, 1786.

'. . . I rode to Beconsfield[1] on Sunday, and found Mrs. Crewe, Windham, young Burke, and a Mr. Adie. I have got into a certain degree of intimacy now with Mrs. Crewe,[2] and find her like 99 in 100—a mixture of good and bad. I mean only in respect to agreeableness and sense, for I know *no* bad in her in any other acceptation of the word. She likes good conversation—takes an interest, and even a share, in all subjects which men would naturally talk of when not in women's company—as politics and literature; and she likes arguments and discussions of all sorts. She seems to have a clear understanding, and a good deal of refinement and ingenuity in her own ideas. All this is good. On the other hand, she is certainly not without a degree of pedantry and *over*-refinement. She betrays as much vanity and desire of admiration in her pursuit of *male* conversation, as real taste and genuine pleasure in it; in short, she seems to be struggling to maintain the same place and consequence by wit and conversation which she once held as a beauty; and for a wife, or one

[1] Mr. Burke's place in Buckinghamshire.

[2] Frances Anne, wife of John Crewe, Esquire of Crewe Hall, created in 1806 Baron Crewe, of Crewe in Cheshire. She was daughter of Fulke Greville, Esquire (Envoy Extraordinary in 1776 to the Elector of Bavaria, and grandson of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke). Mrs. Crewe was a celebrated beauty and Whig toast.

to live constantly with—begging your pardon—you know I always protested against a professed beauty, and so I do against a *professed* wit, but more especially a professed wit grown out of a professed beauty. . . . I do not, however, like to abuse wit, for certainly the fault of our women is to have too little conversation which can possibly interest men; and I have hitherto always found Mrs. Crewe very pleasant company. I am going with her to-day to Dr. Bell, one of the magnetising quacks, and the first whom I shall have seen. Lady Palmerston, Mrs. Crewe, Mrs. Sheridan, and Miss Crewe have been twice at Mainaduc's. They were all infidels the first day except Mrs. Crewe, who seemed staggered a little by the number and variety of the people she saw affected by the *crisis*. The next time, Mrs. Sheridan and Miss Crewe were both magnetised, and both had what is called a crisis—that is, they both fell into a sort of trance, or waking sleep, in which they could hear what passed, but had no power of speaking or moving, and they describe it as very like the effects of laudanum. From what I have heard I am really disposed to believe that these people have some means or other of producing a sort of stupor or sleep, but whether by magnetism or any other means, I know nothing about. And on this little portion of truth they build all the rest of the absurd fictions with which we are amused.'[1]

[1] 'You seem to be a convert to magnetism. I can't say I have absolute belief, but I am convinced no one can answer what their imagination may lead them to, and everybody has been sufficiently

"Park Street: July 8, 1786.

'You will see an account of the reduction of the Prince of Wales' household to-day in the papers, which is so like the truth that I imagine it is put in by somebody about him. He told Hugh of his intention two or three days ago, which is to go abroad quite as a private man, and stay till something is done for him, or till he can pay his debts by saving. He wants 250,000*l*. Hugh went to Pitt about it, who was disposed to undertake the payment of his debt, provided the rest of the money he asks might be appropriated to some specific purposes; but the Prince would not consent to that. The King, in a violent rage, wrote a very angry, abusive letter to the Prince in answer to

bewitched in their lives to feel surprised at it afterwards. I am sure there have been times in my nervous days when Cagliostro might have made me see Julius Cæsar or anybody else. It is singular that if you go through the history of this little planet, you will find that there has been always an alternate age of bigotry and superstition and of infidelity. This eighteenth century has certainly been an unbelieving one, and we are now falling into the other extreme, and our children and grandchildren need not despair of seeing a second *St. Barthelemé.* But what is really strange is that people that have least religion have most superstition. Witness the King of Prussia, and I foresee that the Emperor will end his days in sackcloth and ashes, and that at this moment it would be easier to make his ghost than most people. All bullies are cowards, and it's exactly *who's afraid?* In short, those who don't fear God fear the devil, which convinces me more and more every day that that *honourable gentleman* is an imaginary being.

'I think I have written a very pretty theological, moral, and philosophical essay, instead of a letter; pray have it bound in white parchment and perched up amongst the Scotch lawbooks in the library, that Gilbert's great-grandchildren may reverence their great-aunt.' Lady Harris to Sir Gilbert: The Hague, 1786.

his application for the money, and said he would have nothing to do with so extravagant and worthless a young man. All this is secret enough—not to quote. All the fine people have been magnetised, and are learning to magnetise others. The Prince of Wales had a crisis—that is to say, became sick and faint. The Duchess of Devonshire had one; Lady Talbot, as she was coming out of her crisis, was asked whether she wanted anything; and she not being quite come to herself, and not sensible of where or in what company she was, spoke plain English. . . . . This, however, is Hugh's story, and something short of gospel. I went yesterday to Mainaduc's, but saw nothing even to entertain me. It seemed the grossest dupery imaginable, but there were several people one knows among the dupes.'

In September 1786 Sir Gilbert was returned for Berwick by a majority of 45, an event which produced the following letters from Mr. Burke and the Duke of Portland:—

Edmund Burke to Sir Gilbert Elliot.

'September, 1786.

'My dear Friend,—A thousand and a thousand congratulations from myself and from Mrs. Burke, and from all the old and young connections of this house, to you and Lady Elliot on the excellent news which you stole from your friends and your triumphs to tell me. Number forty-five will be a much more favourite

number with me than ever it was; and the fidelity of the Berwick forty-five will make a very ample amends for the perfidy of the London forty-five. Dick said that no place in England, Scotland, or Ireland could have so much virtue. You are extra-regnal, and a member for a place by itself, and I hope for your life. That life you will not forget to take a rational care of, and by good management I trust that the adding public to it will not make it the more unhealthy. I have much of what all love to give and few to follow—that is, I have much advice to give you at your leisure. But for the present, in a few words, I wish most, most sincerely that you would set about in downright earnest to get rid of some of your virtues. You *must* be less modest. This modesty and moderation is a misprision of talents, and in any age hinders them from appearing with their proper varnish (a phrase, by the way, belonging properly to *brass*). But in this age, when boys of twenty have got to the head of affairs, and bear themselves with all the sour and severe insolence of sixty, and which even from sixty would be intolerable, it is not the fit companion of other virtues or of talents. Instead of their being sought for, they are endeavoured to be suppressed. You must be all that you can be, and you can be everything; we cannot spare an atom of you. You see I talk away, and I am in reality in great spirits. As I am in the lecturing and commanding humour, I advise and order that you visit Edinburgh, and stay two or three days there before you come

southward, to see and be seen. God bless you! . . . . Your most faithful and affectionate humble servant,

'EDM. BURKE.'

Duke of Portland to Sir Gilbert Elliot.

'Bulstrode: Tuesday, September 26, 1786.

'My dear Sir Gilbert,—I most heartily thank you (for) the communication of one of the most interesting and satisfactory pieces of intelligence which I could have received; and though your success entitles you to my congratulations, I feel them so much more due to the public, whom I could wish to think would become deserving of them, and to our common friends, that your share of them bears no proportion to that of the obligations we owe you for the exertions you have made on many other as well as this occasion for the service of the country. I trust that this struggle may prevent you future trouble and expense, and that I may indulge myself in the pleasure of thinking that we may be fellow-labourers in the same cause as long as it is agreeable to you to take a part in public business.—Most sincerely and faithfully yours ever,

'PORTLAND.'

Before the close of the year, Mr. Burke wrote to urge his friend to prepare for active exertions when Parliament should meet.

Edmund Burke to Sir Gilbert Elliot.

'Beconsfield: December 14, 1786.

'My dear Sir,—It is very natural that after your late triumphant toils you should wish to repose a little upon your laurels. You have a place and a family very inviting, I must allow, to domestic quiet and retreat; and there is certainly very little calculated to draw you from home, or that is worth giving you any disturbance there. However, as it is not in our power to forget you, you will allow us to endeavour to keep ourselves a little in your mind, though not by the most pleasant of all remembrances—the public business. I doubt whether the road into Parliament is the smoothest of all the King's highways, and I suspect that the turnpike tolls are a little extravagant. But you are, after many interruptions, there at last. At any rate, and all things weighed, I am glad of it. It seemed to me as if you were not in your proper place as long as you were not in the House of Commons, even such an House of Commons as it is. We can have nothing better than our time and our country affords us. I don't know very well whether, in the letter I wrote to you in an hurry immediately after your election, I made myself rightly understood. I wished you now and then to make a trip to Edinburgh, though it were only for a day or two, as times admitted, or as the new club there happened to meet. I cannot bear that you should not have your natural consequence in your natural situation. This would be absolutely and inevitably the result of

your being known. There are many inconveniences in the distance of your inheritance from your sphere of action; you ought to make amends for it by the opportunities of local influence which are near you. But on this we may talk more when we are in a condition to talk at large.

'All I have for the present to say is, to put you in mind that the House of Commons is to meet by the King's writ rather late; but the writ of your particular friends requires that you should turn your thoughts to the business of the session before it begins, and if possible to give us a fortnight in the south before it actually opens. I wish you would look over the charges, and select such a part as you might think most proper for you to open. There is no sense in being in Parliament without taking such a part as your abilities fit you for. To do less is to injure and maim yourself as well as your friends; and I really am most earnest that whatever you do, great or small, should not be done carelessly or greatly within the limit of your powers. You are too tall for the second rank. You *must* not be in it. Bring up the Impey papers with you, for that is a business which sooner or later we ought not to blink. God bless you! Mrs. Burke begs her best and most affectionate compliments. Poor Richard was ill the whole time he was in Ireland, and has been since rather ailing, but he gets better at last, and is much yours.—I am, my dear Sir Gilbert, most truly and affectionately, your most faithful friend and humble servant, 'Edm. Burke.'

CHAPTER V.

In spite of the adjuration of Mr. Burke, Sir Gilbert did not reach London till the eve of the meeting of Parliament; but as a very serious illness of Lady Elliot's had detained him in the country, he succeeded in convincing his friend that disinclination for the strife was in no wise the cause of his non-appearance until the eleventh hour.

Edmund Burke to Sir Gilbert Elliot.

'New Year's Day, 1787.

'It was but the day before I received your letter that I heard from Windham of the sufferings of poor Lady Elliot. Thank God that she is in such a condition after them as to leave you such freedom of spirits as to enable you to write the liveliest and pleasantest, as well as the best-natured letter in the world. Thank you for it and for everything. I now think that your exertions will be no longer a matter of deliberation with you. So I shall say little more on that subject, further than to tell you that I do by no means give countenance, or even toleration, to any virtue, which by its want of discipline and not knowing its place, stands in the way

of another and prevents its exertions. Pray, my dear friend, know and feel yourself, and all will happen of course that I wish, and that we all stand seriously in need of. Among the charges there is but one engaged, two at most—the Begums to Sheridan; the Rannee of Goheed to Sir James Erskine. So please your palate. What think you of that you have drawn yourself—the Mahratta war and peace? The pit, boxes, and gallery are impatient for one figure more, and cry out *Nosey* in a most obstreperous manner. In truth, I never knew a greater demand for anything than the appearance of Sir Elijah.[1] . . .

'Ever faithfully and affectionately yours,

'Edm. Burke.'

Sir Gilbert took his seat on January 25, Parliament having met on the 23rd. On February 1, his *rôle* in the great drama of the impeachment was decided on.

On the 7th Sheridan made a magnificent oration respecting the treatment of the Begums of Oude, and Sir Gilbert's letters to his wife relate fully the impressions made on him by the parliamentary events of which he was now a witness.

Sir Gilbert Elliot to Lady Elliot.

'Park Street: January 25, 1787.

'I could not take my seat on Tuesday from a mistake that had been made in sending the certificate of my

[1] Sir Elijah Impey, chief judge of the Supreme Court of Calcutta

return to Berwick. It was rectified yesterday, when I took my seat, being introduced by Burke and Sir Henry Fletcher. . . . Burke made quite a riot in the House about me, saying it was the best day he had seen in that place for many a day, and when I was going down the floor with Mundy to go to dinner, Burke forgot where he was so far as to bellow out to me by my name that I must not go out, and then scampered after me. Mundy said, "You shall have him to-morrow, but I can't spare him to-day." Burke answered, "No wonder we all fight for him, he is worth a battle," and so on. All this in his earnest way, and by the side of Major Scott, made quite a scene of it, from which I was running away really in confusion all the time it was passing. My reception was kind and hearty from many others, and I could not help feeling that it was very generally flattering, and I think a testimony of the favourable opinion entertained of my *character*, which is the point I value most. The rest must take its chance, and indeed I am not without my fears of having a little trouble in other expectations—I mean as to abilities—both from the extravagance of my particular friend's partiality, and from being urged perhaps to undertake more than I may execute, especially rusty as I am. This dissertation about myself and relation of my little honours look like Swift's vanity in venting all his little pride and self-complaisance on his female correspondents, who were obliged to hear it; but there is nothing here that one must not of course observe to one's-self, and a letter to one's wife or other *she-slave* is,

and ought to be, the same thing as a soliloquy. It is, however, for nobody else.'

'February, 1787.

'It is settled that I am to move and conduct the impeachment against Impey, for which nothing but some diffidence in my own nerves, and perhaps application, prevents me from having as human appetite as anybody; for he is a consummate villain.[1] . . . I am confounded a little and dismayed at the degree of estimation a number of people seem to hold me in. Burke, Francis, Dudley Long, Montagu, Fox, the Duke of Portland, have all formed an exaggerated notion and extravagant expectations about me; and I seem likely to have your *airy* dream or vision verified by being raised to the skies and then bumped down again, as I may very probably be even lower than I deserve. But all must be risked for a good and valuable purpose.'

'February 3.

'The Indian business is taking a most unexpected but a most pleasant turn to me, who wish to see justice done on this great object by whatever hands it may. The examination of Thursday[2] indicated a sort of concurrence of administration with us, and a degree of

[1] 'Of Impey's conduct it is impossible to speak too severely,' says Lord Macaulay. The connection and friendship which had existed between Warren Hastings and Sir Gilbert's brother, Alexander Elliot, had made Sir Gilbert very unwilling to take an active part in the prosecution of what he nevertheless considered the wholly indefensible policy of the late Governor-General; and it was in regard to these feelings that the charge against Sir E. Impey was selected for him.

[2] Of Mr. Middleton, February 1.

disfavour to the *Indians* that surprised everybody. . . . Burke and Francis were both in the highest spirits after it. . . . Yesterday all these appearances became much more decisive. Sir E. Impey had been ordered to attend as a witness by *Mr. Dundas's* motion, and the whole of his examination by *Dundas* was strongly adverse to him and Hastings. . . . What is most material is, that the whole House (excepting three or four personal and sworn friends of Hastings and Impey) seem completely satisfied on the point, and to have made up their minds thoroughly against Hastings on this charge, and I think more generally too on the rest of his conduct. What is still more material is, that it was said by very good authority that Ministry had given up both Hastings and Impey. . . . I am heartily glad if it be so, because the impeachment will then succeed, and it is richly due both to India and our own honour. . . . How high does this set Burke, and I may say perhaps a few who have discerned between his *single right* and the popular and *universal* wrong! He was called mad, and *worse*, by many perfectly well-meaning men, on this very subject; and he has now dragged his own party—the King—the Ministry—the Parliament, and all the rest of the world, by the mere force of truth, and by his single vigour, into his measure. It was curious to see Pitt and Fox consulting amicably—Sheridan and Dundas settling their questions together—Burke lolling on the Treasury Bench. So things stand at present. All this means nothing—not a *feather* in general politics; but

it is a most excellent and comfortable thing in itself to those who have any real principle in the affairs of India.'

'February 6, 1787.

'I dined at the Robinsons'[1] on Saturday, and *took my seat* at the opera, being introduced by Lady Palmerston.

'She does, I believe, really regret your absence, having as you know a predilection for your rivals. The Cumberland box at the opera is behind the pit, in the centre, and adds to the splendour of the house. The Prince of Wales sits there a good deal. The music, that is, the singing, is very bad, and the dancing indifferent.'

'February 8.

'You know, as I have just told you, that I was up till half after three yesterday morning on account of the masquerade. This was a bad preparation for a late house. I slept tolerably, however, till ten; but this last night, though the House was up soon after one, and I was in bed before two, I have not slept *one wink*. Nothing whatever was the matter with me, except the impression of what had been passing still vibrating on my brain. . . . Sheridan opened his charge, and spoke exactly five hours and a half, with such fluency and rapidity that I think his speech could not be read in double the time. You may imagine the quantity of matter it contained. It was by many degrees the most

[1] Hon. Frederick Robinson, son of the first Lord Grantham; married Gertrude Harris, sister of Sir James.

excellent and astonishing performance I ever heard, and surpasses all I ever imagined possible in eloquence and ability. This is the *universal* sense of all who heard it. You will conceive how admirable it was when I tell you that he surpassed, I think, Pitt, Fox, and even Burke, in his finest and most brilliant orations. The subject was, indeed, worthy of such an effort; and as he did ample justice to it, so did it contribute much to the effect of his speech, and to the applause he obtained by its affecting nature, as well as by the clear justice of his cause. It is impossible to describe the feelings he excited. The *bone* rose repeatedly in my throat, and tears in my eyes—not of grief, but merely of strongly excited sensibility; so they were in Dudley Long's, who is not, I should think, particularly tearful. The conclusion, in which the whole force of the case was collected, and where his whole powers were employed to their utmost stretch, and indeed his own feelings wound to the utmost pitch, worked the House up into such a paroxysm of passionate enthusiasm on the subject, and of admiration for him, that the moment he sat down there was a universal shout, nay, even clapping, for half-a-second; every man was on the floor, and all his friends throwing themselves on his neck in raptures of joy and exultation. This account is not at all exaggerated, and hardly does justice to, I daresay, the most remarkable scene ever exhibited, either there or in any other popular assembly. You ask what the consequence was. All the Ministry and all the friends of Hastings were struck

absolutely dumb, and sat confounded, not knowing how, nor daring to meet the impression made on the audience; and after Burgess had talked absolute nonsense for an hour in favour of Hastings, they recollected themselves enough to move for an adjournment till to-day. Pitt, I think to the disgrace of Government on such a question, not only never gave the least sign of feeling or of life during the speech, but would not give the least hint of his opinion or intentions, which are a profound and impenetrable mystery even to his friends at this moment. Dundas *seemed* by his countenance and behaviour to be with us, but is not to be trusted.'[1]

'February 9, 1787.

'I am at last fairly afloat as regards Impey. I gave notice yesterday of my intention to make a motion some little time hence concerning Sir E. Impey. It will be, I think, just three weeks hence;[2] and he has

[1] Burke declared this speech to be 'the most astonishing effort of eloquence, argument, and wit united, of which there was any record or tradition.' Mr. Fox said, 'All that he had ever heard, all that he had ever read, when compared with it, dwindled into nothing, and vanished like vapour before the sun.' And Mr. Pitt acknowledged 'that it surpassed all the eloquence of ancient and modern times, and possessed everything that genius or art could furnish, to agitate and control the mind.'—Moore's *Life of Sheridan*.

The opinion of Sir James Mackintosh, who heard the speech, was that it would not have suited the taste of a later age. The metaphors were often forced and in bad taste, as when Sheridan called the suckling of an infant by its mother 'a sacrament of nature.'

[2] The impeachment was subsequently postponed to the following session, at the proposal of Mr. Dundas, who professed himself, and Pitt, and everybody connected with them, warm friends to the measure, but

given me such an advantage by the impression made on the House—both of his conduct in this last business of Hastings, and of his general character as to veracity and principle, by his late appearance at the bar as witness—that I think there is little doubt of my succeeding.

'Persons of *all* persuasions seem agreed about his villany, and indifferent as to his fortune, so that, having no support anywhere, I daresay he will be left to justice; and it may perhaps even be considered as a good opportunity for displaying a love of justice, humanity, and so forth, without interfering with people's partialities or interests. I am now in for it, and although not without some anxiety, am not in bad heart. We have carried our question of the Begums in so decisive a way that there seems now no reason to doubt of the impeachments proceeding to the House of Lords, and of some justice being done.

'The defence that was made for him by his few personal friends and advocates was more miserable than could have been conceived. The speakers for him were Burgess, who has completely done for himself in one day; Nichols, a lawyer; Mr. Vansittart, a nabob; Alderman Le Mesurier, a smuggler from Jersey; Mr. Smith, a director; Major Scott, his agent; Macdonald; and Dempster, who is one of the good-natured candid men who connect themselves with every bad man they

thought it should not be brought forward at so late a period of the session. This passed in April, and all the public business was to be concluded by May 15.

can find. . . . His advocates had recourse again to the old topics of the greatness of his services, the difficulties of his station, and so forth, as *set-offs* against this *error;* and the good-natured Dempster thought it all justifiable, because we were in fact the masters in India, and it was intended that we should oppress them if we held them at all. One of them said it was not so severe on the natives of that country, who were always accustomed to despotic government, and used to cruelties; he put me in mind of the apology for skinning eels—"that they are used to it." Pitt spoke fully, satisfactorily, and handsomely, by which I mean in such a way as if he did so with good views towards India and not from intrigue here. I need not say it was for our motion. Dundas did not speak. Our division was 175 to 86.

'There have been now three of the charges heard, and the House has determined that there is ground to impeach Hastings on two [1] of them, but it rejects the third.[2] I should have said the first, for it was that with which they began. That vote was very scandalous, the crime being only the extirpation of a whole nation for a certain sum of money. But the connection with Indians was then closer. . . . The prosperous state of our Indian business gives me great satisfaction. The decision of the question yesterday is the more agreeable to me for being so much the act of Government itself, who certainly are, more or less, though sore against

[1] The Benares charge, moved by Fox; and the Oude charge by Sheridan.

[2] The Rohilla war.

our wills to trust it in such hands, the representatives and depositaries even of our reputation, since they are so in general of the national conduct and character; and I like it also the better for being in the whole (I mean the whole of the Indian prosecution) a matter of evident compulsion on Government and on the House of Commons, who were certainly both founded directly on the protection of Indian delinquency, or on the ruin of those who were redressing it. When I say compulsion, I mean the compulsion of truth when distinctly presented to any large assembly, or to the public; and I say I like better that they should have been *dragged* by truth against all their biasses and interests and engagements, because it will be the better understood in India that such delinquencies *cannot* be protected even by King, Ministers, or Parliament itself; and this impression on the minds of the Company's servants, so contrary to that as yet prevailing, is *the* object I propose by these measures, and is that which reconciles me to the disagreeable unthankful office of accuser and prosecutor, which I have so long taken my share in.

'As to yesterday's particular *charge*, the thing that has made me most inveterate and unrelenting in it is *only* that it related to cruelty or oppression inflicted on two *black ladies*; and I see no reason for using that colour worse than any other.'

'February 15, 1787.

'I went on Tuesday with Mrs. Robinson to the play, and never in my life was more highly entertained and delighted at the theatre than by Richard Cœur de Lion.

It is a most interesting story from our history made into a little opera at Paris, and translated now into English. Mrs. Jordan is quite divine in it.'

'February 20, 1787.

'We had yesterday some little talk in the House, and we have had a good deal of private communication with Ministry, about the impeachment of Hastings, which I thought likely to be voted immediately; but there is at present a blundering crotchet in the heads of some that if we vote the impeachment now, we shall be precluded from going into any more charges afterwards. This is absolute nonsense, but the absolute nonsense of many must be complied with, and the consequence will probably be the deferring of the vote of impeachment till we have carried four or five more of the principal charges. There seems a hearty concurrence of the Ministry in the House of Commons in the business at present, but the Chancellor continues against us; and the House of Lords is of course doubtful. Impey's prosecution is approved by all mankind. Dundas told me yesterday he thought him worse than Hastings, and that I should find no difficulty in carrying on the prosecution. The fact is Dundas wants to dispose of his place. He made some awkward excuses to me for not having removed him, or done something or other with him themselves; and I believe they will be *contented not to be abused*, which they seemed to apprehend I might intend, as they well deserve; but I

want their assistance for a good purpose, and shall not quarrel with them on this subject.'

'February 22, 1787.

'I heard yesterday the first speech of a young member, Mr. Grey,[1] for Northumberland, excessively good indeed, and such as has given everybody the highest opinion both of his abilities and his character. He was brought in for that county by the Northumberland interest as ministerial, which is the side of all his friends and family, but he has taken the other line himself, at least in the only business of this session.

'. . . . He professes not to be of a party, but I think he has a warm leaning to us in general.'

'Bury Street: February 24, 1787.

'I dined Thursday and yesterday at Lady Pembroke's with the Palmerstons, Revels, Lord Herbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, and some others. Miss Beauclerc,[2] the youngest, vastly pretty, Lord Charles Spencer, with a son taller than himself, dined there yesterday. After dinner we had Lord and Lady Chatham, Lady Sidney, Lady Frances Douglas, amazingly kind as usual, without caring a groat about us. I supped last night at Mrs. Crewe's. . . . Mrs. Sheridan and Tickell sang like angels—nothing can be more enchanting. Mrs. Crewe

[1] Afterwards first Earl Grey. He spoke against the commercial treaty with France, which he condemned in 'a speech no less distinguished for eloquence of diction than strength of argument.'—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1787.

[2] She married Lord Herbert in 1787. He succeeded his father as 11th Earl of Pembroke.

refined and double refined, in a mumbling conversation with me, but I think *this* much more entertaining than *nothing*. Tickell[1] spoke with proper admiration and respect of the Ayrshire ploughman's daisy, and Tickell is a judge.'

'March 3, 1787.

'The Governor-General of Bengal still pleads poverty, as you may have observed the other day Major Scott assured the House, *on his honour* as a private man and a gentleman, that Hastings' whole fortune in the world did not amount to 50,000*l.*, in which case it seemed odd to the world that so poor a man should let his wife wear jewels and ornaments as valuable as the whole of his property besides; and should bid for estates, and should make presents of such price.[2] We

[1] Brother-in-law of Sheridan, and author of 'Anticipation.'

[2] The following note conveys the impression produced by the splendour of Mrs. Hastings on Mirabeau, who saw her at the opening of Parliament in January 1786:—

'Tu peux dire à Monsieur Burke, mon ami, que placé à 4 pas de Madame Hastings, qui m'a beaucoup gâté la cérémonie peu imposante et qui devroit être si auguste de la rentrée du parlement, plein de ces robbes (*sic*) rouges, qui grâce aux diamans de la Satrape, me paroissoient degoutter de sang, je suis rentré chez moi, et qu'à l'ouverture de Pline l'Ancien j'ai trouvé ces mots que je le prie de ne pas oublier:—

'"Lolliam Paulinam quæ fuit Caii principis matrona, ne serio quidem aut solemni ceremoniarum aliquo apparatu, sed mediocrium etiam sponsalium cenâ, vidi smaragdis, margaritisque opertam alterno textu fulgentibus, toto capite, crinibus, spirâ, auribus, collo, monilibus, digitisque; quæ summa quadringenties sestertium colligebat, ipsa confestim parata mancupationem tabulis probare. Nec dona prodigi principis fuerant sed avitæ opes provinciarum scilicet, spoliis partæ, hic est rapinarum exitus; hoc fuit quare M. Lollius infamatus regum muneribus in toto Oriente, interdictâ amicitiâ a Caio Cæsare Augusti filio venenum biberet ut neptis ejus quadringenties sestertii operta spectaretur ad lucernas."—*Natur. Hist.* lib. ix.

carried another question against him yesterday.[1] It was moved by Mr. Thomas Pelham.[2] He certainly performed very flatly, but had the recommendations of evident timidity and modesty, which, added to good sense and good intention, carried him through. Dundas spoke amazingly well, by which I mean not in point of ability and eloquence, but in point of sound and just sentiment on the subject of Indian transactions. You would think they were all bit with justice, humanity, good policy, and all the virtues belonging to their station. Whether there be any secret cause for this revolution in the principles of ministry on this subject, or whether it is only the operation of truth strongly stated, and often and long presented to minds even the

'Adieu, mon ami, souviens toi de me faire entendre M. Burke et M. Fox : de me faire connoitre celui-ci et M. Eden, et surtout de m'aimer.'

Translation.—'I have seen Lollia Paulina, the wife of the Emperor Caius, not on the occasion of any grave ceremonial, but at an ordinary supper or wedding-feast, covered with emeralds, and pearls glittering in rows over her whole head, her hair, curls, ears, neck, collar, and fingers, the value of which amounted to 400,000 sesterces, as she was ready to prove by her books and accounts. Nor were these the gifts of a prodigal prince, but the riches of her house acquired by the spoliation of provinces. But see the result of all that plundering; it was on this account that M. Lollius, disgraced for receiving bribes from all the princes of the East, forfeited the friendship of Caius Cæsar, the son of Augustus, and poisoned himself, that his niece might be gazed at by the supper-lights decked out in 400,000 sesterces' worth of jewels.'

[1] The charge relative to the revolution in Furruckabad.

[2] Hon. Thomas Pelham, born 1756, eldest son of Thomas Baron Pelham, was called to the House of Lords in his father's barony in 1801, and succeeded his father in 1805 as second Earl of Chichester. He represented the county of Sussex for many years in Parliament, and filled various high official situations.

least predisposed to admit it, I know not, but I am sincerely happy too see good principles beginning to accompany great power, which they certainly have, either for good or for evil. Lord Hood made a set composed speech for Hastings, well enough written and very well delivered, on the general topic of the indulgence due to men placed in difficult situations and in foreign commands, and of the impropriety of suffering those who had rendered great services and had risked all personal considerations for the public advantage and safety, to be persecuted with suits and prosecutions. He endeavoured to confound this case with that of generals and admirals who were obliged, for the safety and preservation of their armies and fleets, to do things irregular in themselves and contrary to their own feelings, and he illustrated all this by allusions to his own situation in the last war. The whole of what he said was as foreign to the business as if he had talked of the Westminster Scrutiny, but coming from an old admiral and sounding very well and very just to the ear, where its application was not considered it might have done mischief. Pitt, therefore, sprang up, and made the most eloquent, the soundest, the most just, and most *virtuous* speech, with all the animation that Burke, or the *oldest partisan of virtue*, could have shown in such a cause, and with great compliment and great consideration for Lord Hood, but with great spirit, tore Lord Hood's nonsense to pieces, and laid so heavy a hand on Hastings on the most delicate points, particularly on that of

corruption and peculation, that he is evidently and irretrievably lost. This man is now rolled in the kennel by those very persons who a year ago were all prostrate before his greatness, and strewing flowers and laurels under the feet of his elephant. A bribe which he took on this occasion of 100,000*l.* was for the first time treated and felt by the House as *some* impeachment of his pecuniary purity and of his poverty.'

'March 6, 1787.

'I supped at Mrs. Legge's with Windham, Sylv. Douglas,[1] and Lord Stormont, whom I am come to like very much. Yesterday I was to have dined with Windham at Mrs. Legge's, but we were kept too late at the House, and went to the Piazza Coffeehouse, where we dined very pleasantly. I then went to Fox's, to a little meeting of evil spirits, at the head of whom was Welbore Ellis, the Nestor of our army. He is a steady, honourable old gentleman, but seems out of his place in a hopeless Opposition, which is something like a tontine, and seems to be a bad calculation for the class of lives his name belongs to. But honour and principle are not matters of calculation, and may be subscribed to as reasonably at least at three score and ten as at half that age; and, to do Welbore Ellis justice, I am convinced that he is young enough to take honour and duty into his computation, if he computes at all—and this is the only way in political

[1] Sylvester Douglas, created Lord Glenbervie. Married, in 1789, Katherine, eldest daughter of Lord North.

arithmetic to be sure of not reckoning without one's host. Besides, if Welbore Ellis is not too old to be in opposition, he is certainly not young enough to be in office; and in the present inversion of *old* order, when our cabinet ministers are old statesmen of five-and-twenty, I don't see why our lads of seventy should not go into opposition. Sir Grey Cooper also represented the other limb of the coalition. Poor Lord North is returned from Falmouth, but is very near blind, and very ill in all respects.'

'March 8, 1787.

'There has been a couple of days' blackguarding between the Duke of Richmond and Lord Lansdowne in the House of Lords, and it was reported yesterday that they had fought; but it was only a report. The general wish I think was that one should be shot and the other hanged for it. . . .

'From the opera I went to Mrs. Crewe's, where there was a large party, and pleasant people among them—for example, Tom Pelham, Mundy, Mrs. Sheridan, Lady Palmerston, &c. &c.—besides all which were three young men so drunk as to puzzle the whole assembly. They were Orlando Bridgeman, Charles Greville, and a Mr. Gifford, who is lately come to a good estate of about 5,000*l.* a year, the whole of which he is in the act of spending in one or two years at most—and this without a grain of sense, without any fun to himself or entertainment to others. He never uttered a word, though as drunk as the other two, who were both riotous, and began at last to talk so plain

that Lady Francis and Lady Palmerston fled from their side-table to ours, and Mrs. Sheridan would have followed them, but did not make her escape till her arms were black and blue and her apron torn off. Yesterday I called on Sir Joshua, and saw a very fine new acquisition of his. It is the statue of Neptune, and brought from Rome. He is doing the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert full-length—both *perfectly* like. Windham is sitting.'

'March 14, 1787.

'I was again up till two o'clock at a ball. . . . The ball was at Miss Adair's in Stratford Place; she is a daughter of Adair the surgeon-general, and sister of a young man who wrote in the probationary odes, and is a great buff and blue squib maker. The principal person there was Mrs. Siddons, she did not dance, but was attended unremittingly by Windham on one hand, and Tom Erskine[1] on the other, and sometimes young Burke in front, and young Adair in rear. I lost the opportunity of being introduced to her, for which I cannot give you any good reason, for I should have liked it.'

'March 24, 1787.

'Windham performed extremely well on Thursday, and carried his Fyzoola Khan. He spoke short, about an hour and three-quarters, and was generally approved of. His voice and delivery are exceedingly good, and both these and his language resemble his ordinary conversation more than public speaking generally does.

[1] Afterwards Lord Erskine and Lord Chancellor.

His conversation is, you know, in a considerable degree more dressed, and approaches nearer to the tone of debate, or other public performances, than of familiar discourse, and his speech, still preserving the same character, was only so much higher as to suit it to the place and occasion. Both his ideas and language are remarkable for a terse, accurate, logical, and scholar-like character, and this character was perfectly preserved throughout his performance, so that I think he both deserved and acquired considerable credit on this occasion. At the same time there were some defects which flowed from defects in his character or constitution. He was more miserably oppressed by fear than anybody ever was, not excepting me, and I am convinced he had a taste of *Palliser's hell* for the day or two preceding, during which time he may fairly be said to have carried hell about with him in his mind. The House had met and waited for him about an hour, and at length he entered with the colour of a lemon. His voice was extremely low, and his whole manner dejected at the outset, and even when he had recovered the first flurry of rising, his sentences were every now and then interrupted by a long, painful, fatigued, nervous, sort of sob. This degree of apprehension and distrust of himself, perhaps aided by the extreme indecision for which he is famous, probably induced him to decline any general exordium or introduction, or any general statement or view of the case, such as could prepare an ignorant audience to comprehend the application of the particulars he was to treat of, and

fit them to form a clear opinion about it. The same depressed sort of reserve prevented his venturing on anything ornamental, or on urging and enforcing his topics with that force which is a principal excellence, because it is essential for efficacy, in a mixed and popular assembly, composed of understandings and feelings of all paces, from the tortoise to lightning itself; and where, therefore, one should mind, while one attends to the copper-bottom geniuses, not to leave the heavy sailers, who are the bulk of the convoy and the force of the fleet, too far behind. This is all that can be said *disparaging* of this performance, which gave me and all his friends great satisfaction, but which I was surprised had so entirely disgusted and disappointed *himself*, that when I went down to the bench where he sat, immediately after he had done, to wish him joy of his safe deliverance, I found him quite miserable, and with the mortified humiliated appearance of a man who had just ruined himself.'[1]

[1] Madame d'Arblay (Miss Burney), describing an appearance of Mr. Windham during the trial of Warren Hastings, and as late as 1792, says—'He spoke ably and clearly as to the given point in dispute, but with the most palpable tremor and internal struggle. I wonder, so "tremblingly" as he is alive "all o'er," how he ever made the first effort to become a public speaker; but having conquered that opening horror, I wonder yet more, with such ability, readiness, knowledge, facility and command of language, he has not totally vanquished the difficulties of public exhibition. I can only suppose that by nature he is extremely diffident, and by inclination equally ambitious; and if so, the conflict may last through life.'—*Memoirs of Madame d'Arblay.*

'Tuesday, March 27, 1787.

'My last letter was written, at least finished, at Mr. Burke's, where I dined on Saturday. There was only Walker King,[1] John King, another brother of poor Captain King's, Dick Burke, and Lawrence,[2] the principal author of the *Rolliad*. This Lawrence is an uncommonly clever, able man, and extremely serviceable in all the minor out-of-door politics. It was intended that Francis[3] should bring on a charge concerning the maladministration of the revenues in Bengal on Friday next, but as there is to be but one charge before the general question for the impeachment, and as there is a violent prejudice on the other side of the House against Francis, whom they consider as acting on this occasion from motives of personal resentment (although nothing can be more perfectly unjust than this prejudice), yet it has been thought better that Sheridan should bring on the charge of presents and peculations on Friday; and this arrangement is more advisable on another account, for it is of much more consequence to carry this charge of peculation before we come to the question of impeachment than any other whatever. The question of impeachment stands for Monday next, but Mr. Hamilton, commonly known by the name of Magnificent Hamilton, Lord Camelford's tenant at

[1] Afterwards Bishop of Rochester.

[2] French Lawrence, of whom on another occasion Sir Gilbert wrote that, 'tho' a very clever man, with more information than anybody, he is not a famous articulator, and it is difficult to catch all he says. His conversation is like a learned manuscript written in a bad hand.'

[3] Afterwards Sir Philip Francis, reputed author of 'Junius.'

Petersham, gave notice yesterday that he should propose to defer it some time longer; but I do not think he is likely to succeed in that point, as both Pitt and Dundas are the principal authors of the despatch. It shows, however, that there is still a party kept up for Hastings, and it is now understood that they mean to rally once more and make a push to throw out the impeachment at last. . . . There has been reason to think that William Grenville,[1] commonly called Boguey Grenville, is to head this party, and it is even added that Pitt and he are now on bad terms on this subject, and perhaps on some other accounts also. The ministry are certainly far from cordial, and the King is certainly no longer in love with his *virtuous young friend*, and would be very happy to play him just such another trick as he did to the Duke of Portland—that is, to throw him out by a secret interior intrigue, while he seems to be carrying the House of Commons very quietly and securely along with him. As the Marquis of Buckingham was the instrument of this manœuvre before, his brother, it is thought, might not be deemed an unfit one now, and indeed there have been various loose conversations and conjectures this session of the possibility of Pitt's going out, and Lord Lansdowne coming in with the Grenvilles—Boguey to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Lansdowne first Lord of the Treasury. Although these rumours and surmises are probably almost wholly conjectural and imaginary

[1] The Right Honourable William Grenville, afterwards Lord Grenville.

and although in these matters one should never believe above a twentieth part of what the world says, yet some such small fraction of common fame may be true, and account naturally enough for the supposed jealousy and coolness between Pitt and Grenville. Grenville has of late put himself very forward in debate, and received on the commercial treaty high compliments and rather greater distinction from our side of the House than Pitt, which probably might help to elate the natural pride in his blood, and to encourage any projects of ambition he might have, while it would also tend to increase Pitt's jealousy. I have been led to this sketch of *conjectural* politics by the appearances on this question of Hastings, on which there does appear to be a little cloud brewing, and which is certainly too weighty and material a point, and one on which Pitt is too deeply and solemnly pledged, to admit of a defeat, or, I think, even of opposition from his colleagues, without consequences. This is, however, rather reasoning on the ancient notions of the constitution and government than on the late examples, for the defeat of a minister has certainly not of late been considered as affecting in any degree the situation of the minister, who is, on Pitt's own precedent, to be considered as merely and simply the nomination of the King, without regard to the approbation of Parliament. It is still understood that the root of any strength Hastings may yet preserve is in Buckingham House; the distinction between *Queen's Place* and *King's Place* being, I think, now very slender.

'As I was saying, I dined with Burke on Saturday. Miss Palmer [1] and Windham came after dinner. Miss Palmer tells me that Sir Joshua has worked so much, and made so many changes, on his great picture of the Hercules for the Empress of Russia, that she is seriously afraid he no longer knows at all what he does to it, and that although some parts of it were once excessively fine, he has now made it worse than anything he ever did. She seemed really frightened about it, and has at least the merit of being very strongly interested about her uncle's reputation. He means it for this year's exhibition. . . .'

'Bury Street: March 29, 1787.

'Our business in the House last night was a motion by Mr. Beaufoy for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, by which dissenters are excluded from corporate and other offices civil and military. The House was fuller than it has been of late, and, like all questions relating to religion, this had excited a good deal of expectation and attention. The gallery was full of dissenters with straight heads of hair, and of parsons with bushy wigs, and a number of bishops, among whom Dr. Prettyman sat under the gallery. The debate was pretty good, and was remarkable principally for the attendance of poor Lord North, who came down for the first time, and apparently for one of the last times, since the first day of the session. He spoke both long

[1] Mary, daughter of John Palmer, Esq., of Torrington, county Devon, niece and heiress of Sir Joshua Reynolds. She married, in 1792, the first Marquis of Thomond.

and well against the motion, and his voice as full and strong as ever, but he is a most miserably broken and emaciated figure, and his strength seemed every now and then wholly exhausted; he is blind of one eye, and can, I believe, only distinguish light with the other. . . . The division had nothing to do with party, though probably Pitt's sentiments decided pretty much the majority. He and Lord North were together. Fox against them—that is to say, for the motion, and in favour of the claims of the dissenters. I voted on this side, and we were beat by a large majority. I am going to-night to Mr. Kemble's benefit, to see Mrs. Siddons in the part of *Lady Restless*.

'There was yesterday a grand match at tennis between two French markers, Barcelon and Bergeron—the two best, I believe, now in the world. They played even over the court, and Bergeron was the conqueror. I mention this particular for the Commodore's,[1] benefit, who is an amateur; but I may add for your own that what distinguished this match principally was the presence of the Prince of Wales, who came for the first time to the dedans. He was accompanied by a Monsieur St. George, a famous French mulatto, celebrated for his skill in fencing, music, and most other accomplishments, beyond other men, and almost as remarkable in this sort of fame as the *Admirable Crichton*, whom you may have read of. The Prince was also attended by Mr. *Hesse*, now commonly called the Prince of Hesse,

[1] Commodore Elliot, who soon afterwards became an admiral.

and who is more with the Prince than is creditable to his Royal Highness, as I remember we used to think Hesse discreditable company even for Harry Hoare. John St. John sat next the Prince, and was the happiest of men in explaining the meaning of hazards, gallerys, grill, chaces, strokes, bisks, and the rest of the A B C of tennis, the Prince not having yet learnt his letters in that language. . . . I believe it did not at all amuse the Prince, as it requires some skill even to know the merit and to enjoy the beauty of this game, and his presence, though a great honour, was not very advantageous to the dedans in the way of pleasure or profit. The markers were a little dazzled by a royalty, so as to play worse than they would otherwise have done, and the blacklegs were so respectful as to suspend even the betting on this occasion. . . .

'I was wrong in part of my last politics about Mr. Grenville's intention to head those who are to vote against the impeachment; but he gave a sort of notice that he should be for deferring the vote till after the holidays, which is intended to do mischief to the prosecution, and is directly against Pitt's intentions.'

'Saturday, March 31, 1787.

'You will have seen that I anticipated your *reasonableness* as to my offer to go down, and that in the very next letter I wrote you I restricted that *gallantry* to a case which has not happened. It would, indeed, have been the very next door to impossible to have accomplished my visit in my present circumstances; but I

should certainly have *done the impossible itself*, as they say in French, had you been really ill, or ill enough to be out of spirits. Notwithstanding, however, the absence of that cause for your claiming my promise, it is fair to *too-too-too* you for having been so reasonable about it, not only in giving the point up, but in seeing and admitting so readily the difficulties which have stopped it. A great deal of love without any nonsense seems the perfection of wedlock, or of any other lock which fastens two hearts together. It is gold without alloy—it is May weather instead of April—it is, in short, life without crosses—and it is, *in shorter*, my dear Maria's own self instead of a fine lady or a sentimental one. . . . I have inquired since my last letter as to the length of the session, and, though nobody can speak positively, it is the general expectation that Parliament will rise by the middle of May, which seems next to certain if nothing happens to delay the little progress in the business of Hastings which remains to be made this session. The trial will certainly not take place this year, and you will have a chance, therefore, to partake of that solemnity. I feel in tolerable heart as to my own business. I do not propose even to myself any great flights of eloquence, nor aim at the lofty fame which is attainable by four at most of all the millions who are our contemporaries. If I can preserve my place for clear understanding, tolerable judgment, moderate talents, and *perfection* in character and sincerity alone, my ambition will be fully gratified; and if I fail much in fulfilling these temperate desires, my

nerves must take the blame, which sounds so silly that I do not like even to suppose it. I have, however, of late had some reason of the best sort—I mean experimental—to know the difficulty even of mediocrity in this talent of public speaking, as I have seen persons, whose general abilities and qualifications of every sort I do certainly set above my own, fail more than I should easily reconcile to myself in my own case. Windham, for example, did certainly not quite justify the expectations which the certainty we have of his abilities and of his talents, even for discourse and language, reasonably give us; and he did himself credit on the whole, but his shafts fell short of the butt his friends had placed for him, and at which probably he shot himself. The same disappointment undoubtedly took place in your friend Tom Pelham's performance, although the expectations were not so high.

'On Thursday I dined at Mundy's with Mrs. Gally,[1] etc., and a Miss Bowdler.[2] She is, I believe, a bluestocking, but what the colour of that part of her dress is must be mere conjecture, as you will easily believe when I tell you that, talking of the operas, and amongst the rest of the dancers, she said she never looked at the dancing, but always kept her eyes shut the whole time, and when I asked why, she said it was so *indelicate* she could not bear to look.'

[1] Selina, wife of Henry Gally Knight, Esq., daughter of William Fitzherbert, Esq., M.P., a sister of Lord St. Helens.

[2] Miss Bowdler, author of 'Essays.'

'Bury Street: 'Monday, April 2, 1787.

'Having half-an-hour to spare this morning, I shall give you a page or two, lest to-morrow should be more engaged; but I expect to be interrupted every moment by a painter from *Wapping Wall*, a constituent who says he has been commissioned by some freemen at Berwick to do my picture and General Vaughan's for the Town Hall, which I do not believe a word of, and I think he means to force a job out of some of us when his work is done, in which I have given him clearly to understand that he will be disappointed. He is to take a sketch of my head in small, from which he says he shall easily do the large picture without any sitting; as for the figure, he thinks he is sure to succeed in that, as he always makes it a rule to follow the proportions of the Apollo Belvedere. He is a painter of the sterns of ships, and such things, and I presume my picture may one day adorn a smack, for I do not flatter myself it will ever get within the Town Hall. The worst of it is that he will probably destroy me a couple of good forenoons.

'On Saturday I dined at Lady Palmerston's. . . . Mrs. Cholmondeley[1] came in just after dinner, and called for a bottle of champagne, and was in one of her high-spirited humours. She has got excessively fat, like *other* elderly people. She told us she wa fifty-seven, and for one so near sixty she is really a surpris-

[1] Wife of the Hon. and Rev. Robert Cholmondeley, and sister of 'Peg Woffington.'

ing creature both for looks and vivacity. . . . I went on to the opera, where I am now a great frequenter of ladies' boxes. I went into Lady Carlisle's to see Bell Gunning; into Lady Cunningham's to see Miss Gunning. I waited on Lady Frances Douglas, who had Lord Dalkeith and Lord Henry with her. Lord Dalkeith, a fine natural-spirited boy, and by no means ill-looking, though still promising to be like the Duke. He said he had been laid up some time with a lame leg. I said as he was a fine gentleman who attended the opera, I supposed it was the gout; he said 'No, sir; it's a kick in the shins at football;' which I thought a good natural account of a schoolboy's lameness.

'After the opera I supped at Mrs. Crewe's, and once more heard Mrs. Sheridan and Mrs. Tickell[1] sing several things together, but the most lovely thing that music can produce is their Ally Croker, which they sang again the other night. Mrs. Sheridan is really nearer one's notion of a muse, or an angel, or some such preternatural or semi-divine personage, than anything I have ever seen alive, and it is therefore not surprising that Mr. Mundy should be very much in love with her. Sheridan, it seems, has taken notice of it; but there has never been the slightest suspicion of Mrs. S. having listened to Mundy, or to anybody else. I think he is a universal favourite with your sex, being both handsome and good humoured; but I should think him too little entertaining were I a lady. We had another pair of

[1] Sister of Mrs. Sheridan.

lovers—viz. Lord Carysfort and Miss Grenville, who are rather come to a sober time of life for the amusement of courtship, but they did their best. She is much fallen off, though she never was beautiful. When Mrs. Sheridan and her sister were singing these words, which they dwelt on a long time—'This may soothe, but cannot cure, my pain'—Lord Carysfort fixed his widower's eyes in a most languishing, amorous, and significant manner on his love, who did not seem at all at a loss to understand his glances, and whether she was entertained with them or not, there were several of us at table who were. We had, besides these, Sir Watkin and Lady Williams, Dean Marly, Lady Frances Douglas, Lord Downe—a very pleasant gentlemanlike young man, an M.P., and a staunch friend—and Tom Pelham, who begged another look of your portrait, which I have no notion of going on bestowing on him gratis, and I proposed to let him have a look whenever he is in *distress*, at so much a look. He said I put him in mind of a French novel called *Manon de l'Escaut*, where a lady is carried away prisoner, and her lover follows her, and procures the indulgence of seeing her now and then; when the guards discover the pleasure he takes in it, they make him pay so much a day, and then raise it to the same sum an hour, and so on, and minutes. These suppers are bad in one respect, they are excessively late, and I did not get to bed till half after two.

'. . . I called yesterday on Lady Northampton;[1]

[1] Widow of Claudius Amyand, Esq., uncle to Lady Elliot. She had been previously married to George Compton, Earl of Northampton.

she was very kind both towards me and you, who are, I am convinced, nearer her heart than anybody in the world. She likes your picture very much, and thinks it very like.'

'April 3, Tuesday Morning.

'I must first tell you that the question of the presentations was carried last night with a high hand as usual, and was remarkable for bringing Lord Mulgrave and William Grenville out against him[1] as strongly as any of us. They have stickled for him, and Lord Mulgrave has repeatedly spoke for him, but yesterday they both laid heavy hands on him, and treated him as thoroughly and decidedly corrupt and profligate in money. He has, however, still fast hold of Buckingham House, and there has been a point carried for him, which, without that support, could not and ought not to have happened. It is to defer the vote of impeachment till after the holidays. Pitt has been obliged to yield this point to Grenville to avoid a rupture, and Burke conceded it to Pitt to avoid a separation and division of our combined forces; indeed, it would have been vain to oppose it, as without Pitt he must have been beat. Fox, however, though he saw the necessity of yielding where we had not the power to contend, yet felt the point so important that he made a speech and protest for himself against it, which gave me a good impression of him, as his eagerness could proceed on this occasion from nothing but a very strong and sincere

[1] Warren Hastings.

earnestness on a point which he thought prejudicial to the general powers of the House of Commons.

'April 12.

'On Tuesday, after sealing your letter, I went out in quest of a dinner. It was past 5 o'clock. I first went to Sir David's,[1] but found an empty house, then to Sir George's,[2] who was drinking wine *after* dinner, and who saved me the trouble of trying the Legges and Palmerstons, telling me they were not at home; I saw the Robinsons driving by, and hoped to be taken on by them, but found they were going to Colonel Barré's, who might perhaps have poisoned me as a Burkeite, which is the bane of a Landsdownite. I turned my face eastward in despair, but was in luck enough at last to find Morton Pitt, with whom I dined *en famille*. Lord Herbert has carried his bride to Richmond, where they are still eating their honey. It is a very pretty match, and a pretty hive to eat it in. I could not help expressing a wish to Lord Herbert, or rather making him the offer to exchange my present situation with him, and if he would impeach Sir Elijah for me I would marry Miss Beauclerc for him. If I had but thrown you into the bargain, he would no doubt have taken me at my word, but as it is I never heard more of it.

'After dinner I walked over the bridge to Astley's, and being a friend of the family was admitted behind

[1] Sir David Carnegie, married to a daughter of ex-Governor Elliot's.
[2] Sir George Cornewall, brother to Lady Elliot.

the scenes. I supped at Windham's with Mrs. Siddons. There were Mr. and Mrs. Siddons, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Miss Palmer; Dudley Long; Mr. Lambton, a learned man; Mr. Malone, a dramatic critic; Mr. Metcalfe, also a scholar; and myself.

'Mrs. Siddons is very beautiful in a room, but of the strong powerful sort of beauty that reminds one of a handsome Jewess. She does not speak much, and that modestly enough, but in a slow, set, and studied sort of phrase and accent very like the most familiar passages of her acting, but still in a degree theatrical. Mr. Siddons, quite a plain, modest, well-behaved man; tall, stout, clean, and well-looking, but nothing theatrical, romantic, or witty: and his appearance not such as one would conceive the mate of the tragic muse ought to be. The rest of the company was all very pleasant, and the conversation now and then a little learned, now and then a little witty, but always perfectly natural and agreeable, and I got home between one and two.'

'April 14, 1787

'I went yesterday to Mrs. Jordan's benefit with Mrs. Robinson. We sat in the pit all in a row. The play was "As you Like it;" Mrs. Jordan's part Rosalind, and she did it inimitably. I seldom remember being better entertained at a play. Kemble played her lover Orlando, and very well. She is, you know, famous for her figure in breeches. She played Roxalana in the farce of the "Sultan," and the little cocked-up nose, you know, who plays the devil in the seraglio, and

worries the sultan by being petulant and impertinent to him. This was a famous part of Mrs. Abington's, and I still think she gave a juster notion of the character, for with a great deal of vivacity, and all the petulance intended by the author, her manners were those of a lively gentlewoman. Whereas Mrs. Jordan, though infinitely agreeable, and charming you by the naturalness of her acting, yet does certainly now and then, and, indeed, in the general character of her manners, descend to a lower style of life, and nearer to vulgarity of tone, than is always suited to the rank of her part, or the taste of the better half of her audience.

'April 17, 1787.

'I sent you an account of Mrs. Jordan last letter. The day after I went to the play again to see "Julia," the new tragedy by the author of "Braganza." Mrs. Siddons played extremely well, and was almost constantly on the stage, and Kemble also did really excellently, and seems to be growing into a good actor, in which case he will be very valuable, having such advantages in figure and countenance. These two certainly made the play succeed better than I think it entitled to do from its own merit. It is, like all Jephson's [1] writing, too much fine writing and rhetorical poetry, or poetical rhetoric, to affect the passions at all. The plot is always very defective, and, on the whole,

[1] Mr. Jephson had brought out a successful tragedy called *The Count de Narbonne*, in 1781.—*Letters of Horace Walpole*, Nov. 18, 1781.

the tragedy very indifferent on the stage, though probably good by the fireside.

'Mrs. Siddons spoke the epilogue, and exposed her want of all comic power and familiar easy levity. She was like the ass playing the lap-dog; and though we did not wish to reject her gambols with a cudgel, like the man in the fable, yet we all longed for the real lap-dog, Mrs. Jordan, in her place.

'I went home with Burke and Windham, and Walker King supped with us, and we criticised Burke out of his admiration of his countryman's (Jephson's) performance . . . I called yesterday on Miss Gunning, and found surgeons dressing her shoulder—that's to say, they had just done their work. She was overturned with her sister, it seems, last week in a coach in Richmond Park, and had almost dislocated her shoulder, but it proves only a bad bruise. Bell Gunning[1] was there yesterday; she was not at all hurt, having more flesh on her bones to break the fall. Miss Gunning has either Euclid, or a Horace, or a German poet, open before her when one calls. She says she does not discover these secrets to many, but she does not dislike to be known to possess these unusual accomplishments for a maid of honour. She really understands extremely well all these things, and I have made her demonstrate a proposition and translate and criticise an ode, so as to be satisfied that she has been really well founded.'

[1] The youngest daughter of Sir R. Gunning; married General Ross.

'April 20, 1787.

'You will see by the papers that the Prince's affairs are coming on. There seems a considerable division of opinion even amongst those who might most naturally have been expected to take a decided part for the Prince—I mean those who generally vote with Opposition; but I understand that several *of our country gentlemen* are against him, and I doubt the extremely delicate subject of his connection with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and the constitutional dangers and doubts belonging to this most equivocal condition of things, will force itself into the discussion, though not very pertinent to it. I have always thought that part of his conduct, so far as it is known to me, a most heavy offence against duties and interests too sacred and too important to eight or ten millions of us to be excused even by the levity or the *passions* of youth. . . . A prorogation has been speculated on as a possible expedient for getting rid of this subject for some months longer. But this would, I think, give general offence, and put the people's love for these extraordinary exertions of prerogative to a more severe proof than can be wished for at Court. Besides, Hastings' business will not be far enough advanced to admit of this measure, and the King will never venture to interrupt the proceedings against Hastings by prorogation. That would speak the *bulse* and the *cradle* too plainly to be ventured.'

'May 1.

'We had another conversation yesterday on the Prince's affairs. It is well enough reported in to-day's "Morning Herald." The material circumstance was that Fox declared, by authority from the Prince, in the fullest and most unequivocal manner, that there was not the smallest foundation of any sort for the story of the marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and that if that subject was thought fit to be brought into discussion, the Prince would himself give answers to any questions which might be put to him in the Lords. Rolle hinted at the distinction between a *legal* marriage and some ceremony that might satisfy the consciences of some persons, but Fox rejected any such distinction, and asserted again that there never had been the slightest ground for this slander, either legally or illegally, and, in a word, denied positively from the Prince himself the whole of this slander, in words so strong and so unqualified that we must believe him.[1] This is one instance more of the difficulty there is to know the truth of the most important facts which happen in our own day and in the place where we live. I own I was much rejoiced to hear this story so completely contradicted, as I thought it both mischievous in the highest degree to the country, and in the same degree dishonourable to the Prince. Fox professed as

[1] It is well known that immediately after the conversation referred to, Mr. Fox was made aware that he had been misled by the Prince, and Fox in consequence broke off all relations with him for a considerable period.

strongly, on the part of the Prince, his readiness to lay his correspondence with the King about his debts before the House, if it was required, and even to give the particulars of his debts as minutely as the House would wish. . . . I think yesterday was a very good day for the Prince, as the story of Mrs. Fitzherbert was what staggered great numbers, and he offers such unreserved satisfaction on every point which has been started against him, that the natural desire of every man to relieve him from so unbecoming a situation seems now to have nothing to contradict or restrain it. . . . This conversation leaves Mrs. Fitzherbert in an awkward way; but, for my own part, I feel much better satisfied with her conduct now than I did before.'

'House of Commons: Thursday, May 3, 1787.

'It is only one o'clock in the day, though I date my letter from this place, for I am come here with Windham about a paving bill for the town of Swansea. I have also already had a visit from Burke, and been at his house at a little consultation—all which occupations will, I fear, abridge your allowance to-day. I was up late last night, by going to the Ridotto with Lady Palmerston and Mrs. Crewe; and a worse business never was seen. The pit was not floored, but left in its natural ragged state, with steps thrown up to the stage, which, of course, was so small an area for our walk, that though there were not, I daresay, much above 100 people, there was not room to walk further than a sailor does on a deck. It was, besides, miserably

lighted, and more favourable to retiring love than to public festivity. Every soul was growling and grumbling, though it might have been easily guessed before we went; but Lady Palmerston had been in as great a fever to get there as I have seen Harriet on similar occasions. The Duchess of Cumberland was there with Lady Elizabeth, and asked the *notables* to sup in her room. I was asked with the rest of my party, but there was so large a table, that the guests had little communication with her, and I did not renew my acquaintance there, which I know you will abuse me for, as well as for never going to Cumberland House or St. James's this year. As for Carlton House, it has not been open in an accessible way except to his table companions. There were very few even of the frail at this uninteresting entertainment, and, as soon as supper was over, I got Mrs. Crewe off, and walked home, very glad to be released. Between the House of Commons and the Ridotto I went to Mrs. Gally's, where I met the Anguishes and Pepper Arden. Windham spoke yesterday remarkably well; it was on the farming the post-office tax. It was an attack on Sir Richard Hill, a thorough-paced thick-and-thin treasury man, and was done with great force and humour.

'The Prince of Wales' business stands still for to-morrow, but conferences and negotiations have taken place between Pitt and the Prince and the King to-day, the result of which I do not yet know, but think it not unlikely that some accommodation may take place, which is most desired by all parties, for I find

there is a great difference of opinion amongst those who are called the Prince's friends, and that the business was brought on against the advice of the Duke of Portland, Fox, and the principal people of the party.

'I wrote the foregoing pages just before dinner time, and most unfortunately met Burke full tilt, with whom I was kept walking in the Park and streets till too late for my dinner, which, after all, I have had here in Great Russell Street. I have read part of Mrs. Crewe's *Paris Journal*, but am not much edified. The best thing that can be said of it is that it aims at nothing great, and is simple and familiar. Every now and then one meets with a pleasant thought and a good description; but I should have supposed that a person who saw everything with the intention of writing it would have produced something more interesting. There is a talk of a party from Crewe Hall, in Cheshire, to see the Cumberland lakes. Windham is to be one, and perhaps Sheridan and his wife. I said I would meet them with you, and escort them northwards; but we are all too fine people to be depended on.'

'Bury Street: May 5, 1787.

'. . . First for politics:—You will see by the papers that the Prince's affairs are *amicably* adjusted, and that Alderman Newnham's motion in the House of Commons was therefore withdrawn yesterday. I told you in Thursday's letter that some communication had taken place between Pitt and the Prince. Pitt wrote a letter on Thursday to the Prince, informing him—(I

don't know exactly the words)—but informing him in general terms that the King was ready to afford him the relief he desired. The letter was so general and so loose that Pitt added his readiness to give any further verbal explanations of it which might be required; and Fox being out of the way, Sheridan had accordingly a conference with him, in which he said he meant the professions in the letter to be understood in the most extensive and liberal sense, and that he would abide by any construction which the Prince himself thought fit to put upon it. The English of this is an offer to propose, from the King, the payment of his debt and increase of his income, instead of its being moved in Parliament in opposition to the King, which till that time was the state of the case. This amounts, after what has passed, to a complete victory on the Prince's part, and a complete defeat and surrender on that of the King and minister. The ground, however, taken to reconcile this assent of the King's with his former and late position and decided refusal is the declaration made by Fox contradicting the story of the marriage. But this cannot pass on the world, because first, the King must have known the real state of that affair long ago if he had chosen to inquire: and next, Mr. Pitt, at the very time when he professed the most violent opposition to the payment of the Prince's debts, and threatened the discussion of some points, which, he supposed, would intimidate the Prince from proceeding, did, however, in direct terms and repeatedly, disclaim any allusion whatever to Mrs. Fitzherbert, and

treated his adversaries as scandalously misrepresenting him when they charged him with threatening any inquiry into that transaction. I should suppose that Pitt apprehended, after the satisfaction the Prince had given relative to Mr. Fox, that an opposition to his relief would be either ineffectual or so unpopular that he did not choose to risk the loss of so capital a question, and perhaps was not very willing to irritate the future king past redemption. I consider the turn of this business as fortunate for the Prince, because I find there was a strong disinclination to the business in many persons of the greatest weight among his friends, or those at least lately accounted so. The Duke of Portland, in particular, had strongly dissuaded the Prince from bringing it on, principally on the knowledge he had of the very general dislike to it amongst the principal men in the party, but also, I believe, from a disapprobation of the measure in his own mind. Fox had been of the same opinion, and the Prince had determined of his own head, or on the advice of nobody knows who, to force it on contrary to the sentiments and wishes of his principal friends. I am sorry to find that there had been rather an angry conference between the Prince and the Duke of Portland on the subject, and that the Prince considers the Duke as no longer on terms of friendship with him. I understand that he accuses the Duke of canvassing members of Parliament against him on this occasion, which I believe is absolutely false, for not only I never heard a syllable on the subject one way or the other from him

myself, but I have not been able to hear of anybody who has.

'This measure being pushed on contrary to the Duke's advice, and carried through by Fox and the rest of the party, seems to be considered as a sort of separation and schism in the party, that may lead to discussion on other occasions, and perhaps to a total dissolution of what is called the Whig party of which Lord Rockingham was once the head, and of which the Duke of Portland has been the head since Lord Rockingham's death. This is the *only party* existing in the country, and the only strength that can ever be opposed to the perpetual and *indissoluble* weight of Court influence, so that I should consider it as a misfortune to see this faggot split into separate twigs which may be easily broken singly. I do not, however, see these consequences as necessary, and possibly the warmth of Burke's imagination may exaggerate the mischief, although his judgment is in general as much juster than other men's as his fire is greater. His own opinion was against the Prince, but his objections were, in a great degree, personal to himself as having taken the lead formerly in opposing the payment of the King's debts, and as having moved and been the author of the Establishment Bill for restraining and controlling the King in his expenses on the Civil List. He had determined, therefore, to go to the country during the discussion of this question. There were yesterday circular cards of invitation to Carlton House to a great part of the House of Commons. Burke did not think it right to go, as he

did not mean to support the measure, but wrote a letter to the Prince explaining the personal reasons which disabled him, as mover of the Establishment Bill, to take any part in serving him on this occasion. When Burke wrote this letter, he did not know the intention of the meeting, and he gave me the letter to have it delivered or not, as the circumstances should happen to require it, according to my own discretion. The meeting was at three o'clock, and there were about 180 members of the House of Commons. The Prince made a short speech, gracefully and naturally delivered, but without the appearance of any study or preparation in the language, though not without as much tremour and feeling as served to make it more interesting. The purport was only to thank us for the zealous and generous support we had manifested an intention to give him, which, as it could not but be extremely satisfactory to him in many views in an occasion so important to his affairs, was also not a little flattering to his vanity. He then informed us that the business was fortunately in a train of being adjusted amicably, and that there would therefore be no occasion to press the motion expected that day in the House of Commons. He expressed some regret at having been obliged to trouble his friends on an occasion of so unpleasant a nature, and repeated, with a great deal of natural grace, his thanks and gratitude for the support he had met with. He then expressed a wish that we would go down to the House, although no difference of opinion was to be expected that day, but he could not help

feeling that such a show of support would reflect credit on his cause; and away we all went. Of course I did not deliver Burke's letter, as the business was not to come into debate. . . . This is enough of the Prince to-day. I shall only add, what I presume you know from my former letters, that my own opinion was clearly for relieving this younker *once* from the natural consequences of his age and situation. While I am on this subject, I may tell you that, coming from Lombard Street on Thursday, I saw people crowding into the Mitre Tavern, Fleet Street, and followed the stream into a large room full of people of both sexes, who were assembled to *debate* on the payment of the Prince of Wales' debts. I heard eight speeches by no means so bad, in any instance, as three-fourths of those I hear in Parliament, and was extremely well entertained.'

'May 8, 1787.

'I fear I have not time to-day to tell you very particularly all the stories about the Prince of Wales' affairs, nor is it indeed of any use to retail all the lies and conjectures that are wandering about town on this subject. The fact, I believe, was last night that, after some interviews and conferences between the Prince and his friends with Pitt and some other ministerialists, the Prince had given to Pitt, in writing, some specification of his expectations or wishes, which Pitt forwarded to the King at Windsor, and the answer to which was not expected till to-day. It seems difficult now that the business should not be adjusted, because

if they were to differ after what is passed, one or other of the two—the King or the Prince—*must* be so much in the wrong, that it can hardly be supposed either would venture the consequences. . . .

'I have read about half of Burns' Poems, and am in the highest degree of admiration. I admire and wonder at his general knowledge of the human character, of the manners, merits, and defects of *all ranks* and of many countries; the great *justness* and also the great liberality of his judgment; and, what is most to be stared at of all, the uncommon refinement of his mind in all his views and opinions, and the uncommon refinement of his taste in composition. This, I say, seems more wonderful than genius, because one is apt to suppose genius is *born*, refinement only *acquired*. Now, granting his access to good books, yet consider the company he has lived in, and in how much worse than total solitude his mind has had to work and purify itself in; consider how severe labour blunts the edge of every mind, and how the discomforts of poverty in a Scotch climate shall cripple genius, and what a *sedative* it must be to the imagination—nay, how much nearer even the pleasures of his rank must lead to *sottishness* than to *elegance* and *wit*—and then see what a victory *mind* has over *matter*, and how "*will* has dung *fate*" in this prodigy. You may keep this panegyric to yourself, as I perceive I have indulged myself in an oration. . . . What a pity that Hawick had not been so celebrated instead of Ayr!

'I shall give you an account of the play at the Duke

of Richmond's which I saw last Saturday, but I really have not time now; only this by the way:—Mrs. Hobart is really excellent, and not to be surpassed by any professor in point of voice and delivery. The action on a stage should be *just*, but it should be *colossal*, though well proportioned and well designed. For painting that is really good, would, in the same manner, be miserably faint and feeble for *scenes*. The still motionless manners, therefore, of gentlefolks do not suit this situation, and give an appearance of *poverty* and want of spirit to their performance. In short, you see, good company will still be dull. Mrs. Bruce, formerly one of the Miss Sharpes, at Bath, is a perfect waiting-woman. Mrs. Damer, pleasing in herself, but poor enough as an actress. Lord Derby declaimed the declamatory parts of his character extremely well, but in the bustles, agitations, and passionate parts, was so ill served by his countenance and features as to be giggish. Dicky Edgecumbe the most entire gigg I ever saw, though I don't know that he did Sir Brilliant Fashion amiss.'

'Bury Street: Thursday, May 17, 1787.

'I was last night at the masquerade at Vauxhall with the Palmerstons, the Culverdens,[1] Miss Burney, Windham, Pelham, etc. I went in despair, as I always do on such services, but it answered vastly well, and I was more amused than usual at such places. The buildings and decorations were really fine and well designed. No

[1] Mrs. Culverden was Lady Palmerston's sister.

heat, nor much cold; a great many people, but no crowd on account of the extent of the ground. A good supper, and a blackguardish company, with a dash of good company, and no riot while we stayed, which was past three o'clock; but the Vauxhall *squeak* was just beginning, and people were becoming very *tender* and very quarrelsome.'

'May 22, 1787.

'Harriet arrived yesterday. I thought she looked remarkably well, but I believe I should rather say remarkably pretty. I don't think she ever looked handsomer. She will come to Minto almost immediately, and spend the summer with us.'

'Bury Street: May 26, 1787.

'I dined yesterday at Lady Palmerston's with an Indian or two. She had an assembly afterwards, and after that carried me to Ranelagh, and did not bring me back till half after two. I never saw any two people make such toil of pleasure, as both he and she. She seems completely worn down by her raking, but is always eager for the next labour. This was my first and last Ranelagh for the year 1787.'

CHAPTER VI.

It may be presumed that the expenses connected with Sir Gilbert's return for Berwick in 1786 had been heavier than he had anticipated, since it appears from the following letter addressed to him by Mr. Burke in October 1787, that he had already determined not to stand a second time for that constituency.

'October 17, 1787.

'My dear Sir,—I knew from the Duke of Portland a good while ago that you had taken your leave of Berwick; yet I must confess the repetition of the same unpleasant intelligence from yourself has caused me as much vexation as if the thing was fresh. I believe people ought to learn their philosophy young, it has no great effect on late beginners. The effect of this on others at the general election is to me a subordinate consideration indeed. I care much for the present representative of Berwick. Berwick itself, and the consequence of its future representation in political interests, has not cost me a second thought.

'Parliament certainly meets at the time and moment assigned, and as certainly I shall be happy in

seeing you at the time you have fixed; further this deponent saith not. I endeavoured some days ago to see Mr. Dundas, in order to contrive matters so as to prevent the public business of peace and war from clashing with its other business of public justice. He refused to see me at that time on account of his occupations, but told me, in answer to my letter, that he would name some other time for the conversation I desired; I suppose he does not much like my conversation, for I have not heard from him since. You see that as to the material part of your inquiry I can give you no satisfaction at all. I am perfectly in the dark about the interior of affairs. I see that all the nations in Europe[1] are going to war, but it is not very clear to me about what they are to fight; perhaps it is not quite clear to themselves. This nation, however, knowing as little of the matter as I do, is perfectly well satisfied, because one thing appears pretty distinctly—that there is something very like an aspect of some sort or other of war. This people, who awhile ago took it very ill that a House of Commons should censure any kind of peace, are perfectly willing to go to war with or without a pretence, with or without any policy. They

[1] The Empress of Russia, seeking the dismemberment of the Ottoman empire, was engaged in war with Turkey. The Emperor Joseph, closely allied with Catharine, had views of aggrandisement for himself in Germany. France, on the eve of revolution at home, was employed in fomenting the agitation of all other countries. In the Netherlands the Stadtholder had been restored to his authority by a military intervention on the part of the King of Prussia, Frederick the Second, brother of the Princess of Orange.

would certainly be very angry with any who should in this instant ask them what they mean. After what has happened *I* think I shall hardly be the person to ask them that question, and as little should I wish to put myself forward, in case they should be disappointed and cheated of the blessings of war; for I am sure, in the present temper of the people, they are perfectly ready either to applaud the spirit of measures leading to hostility, or to applaud the prudence by which the hostile measures are no longer pursued. In this temper of the times we are but ciphers. However, I am getting you into premature speculations on our conduct for the next session. To me they are certainly premature, as I know very little of the spirit of what is going on. At what price we are to purchase it is yet in the womb of time, but in the present view of things the entire destruction of the French interest in Holland is a good event to this country. Whether the mode of the Prussian interference, in the way, on the principles they did interfere, may hereafter be of good example I cannot tell; but surely the energy, activity, and resources of Sir James Harris on this occasion are matters of wonder. I do not find that the ministers have been so full of public acknowledgments on this occasion as they ought to be. But to return to our own business.—I am sure you have not been inactive, if you have been so in any considerable degree it is not for me to reproach you. For near three months, almost literally I have done nothing. The strong

opinion I had of parliament not meeting till after Christmas encouraged me in the procrastination of idleness and recess. The consequence has been that when, about four or five days ago, I turned to business, it was annoying how faint and dull all impression of former facts appeared to me. But I warm again, and among other things will certainly turn my thoughts to your share of the business. If I have been idle, others have not been so. Francis has worked something. Anstruther, Adam,[1] and Lawrence work. Mrs. Burke desires most respectfully and most cordially to be remembered to Lady Elliot. Is Lady Harris[2] with you, or can she be absent from the Hague at such a time? And if she is with you, pray let us be joined in the same good wishes to her, and add our congratulations on the glory Sir James has acquired. It was but last

[1] William Adam of Blairadam, the Lord Chief-Commissioner of the Jury Court.

[2] Lady Harris was with her husband at the Hague. In the following spring Sir James was raised to the rank of an ambassador-extraordinary in acknowledgment of the great diplomatic services he had rendered to Great Britain and Holland, especially in having negotiated a treaty of alliance between the two countries. On April 1, 1788, Lady Harris described to her sister the ceremonial of her presentation to the Princess of Orange in her new capacity of ambassadress, and the return visits of the Prince to her which took place two days later. 'He came *en gala*—with sons and chamberlains, decorated with all his ribbons and diamonds—as solemn and magnificent as if I had been Queen Charlotte herself. The gratitude and *dévouement* of this country to Sir James is as great as possible, and the alliance is as good as concluded, and will be signed in a week or ten days. The consequence will be a treaty of commerce, and then I hope we shall retire. They returned to England in the autumn, when Sir James received his peerage.

night I heard his praises loudly sung at Bulstrode by the Duke and Lord Titchfield. The chorus did not forget its part. Adieu, my dear sir, and believe me ever most faithfully and affectionately yours,

'EDM. BURKE.'

The winter session having begun, Sir Gilbert went up to town in November, and resumed his correspondence with Lady Elliot.

'Lincoln's Inn: November 10, 1787.

'I dined yesterday with Douglas at the Bears, where I found Pardoe presiding, and everything much as I left it ten years ago, except that one of the company had become a Judge, another King's Counsel, two others Serjeants, whom I had left juniors at the bar, and one or two others who were not known at that time are now pretty high. Jekyll was one of the company. He is elected for a borough of Lord Lansdowne's, in the room of Alderman Townshend, and will probably be a speaker, but with what success is doubtful. He is a professed wit in company, and in his speeches at the bar, mixes quaintness with jesting; but that sort of thing does not always take in the House of Commons. He is, however, clever enough to adapt his mannner to the taste of his audience. Mundy is going to be married to the greatest fortune in England—to Lady Middleton. They say she has at least 100,000*l.*, or 150,000*l.*, at her own disposal,

besides a jointure of 4,000*l.* a year. She is said to be a very pretty woman, besides about 40.'

'London: November 15, 1787.

'Elliot of Wells carried me yesterday to Lord Heathfield,[1] who received me with great politeness and appearance of friendship. He is a fine old man, and preserves a sort of beauty which is in character and consists in tolerable freshness and features of a marked and commanding style. But his age appears by the total decay of his teeth. He seems wrapt up in his profession, and more particularly in his own province of Gibraltar, where he is to return at the end of next summer, in the intention of leaving his bones under that rock, which will, indeed, be a noble and proper monument. I expected to have found something more dignified, more silent, and more saturnine in his manner, from what we know of his severity in discipline, his extreme simplicity and abstinence in living, and his unpopularity in the garrison. But he has a brisk, lively manner, full of attention and civility, a great deal of conversation, approaching even to *rattle*, and no starch of any kind that I could perceive, although no want of dignity appears either. I should have thought that he must have been the most popular general in the service, and I still suspect that all the obloquy he fell under was the consequence of his

[1] George Augustus Elliot, youngest son of Sir Gilbert Elliot, third Baronet of Stobs, Roxburghshire. He was born in 1718, and was created Lord Heathfield, 1787, for his gallant defence of Gibraltar.

adherence to his duty and the dislike of the garrison to do theirs.'

'Pall Mall Court:[1] Saturday December 8, 1787.

'I called in yesterday at Burke's for a chance dinner, which is the first time I have ever done so either this winter or last, although I had always professed to intend it. But, in the first place, their hours are very irregular, and next, though I admire him so much and like all the rest of his family, yet it is not lively society, and dinner does not go off so lightly as in Park Street[2] or Russell Street.[3] I was yesterday in the luck to see Charles Fox. The rest of the party were Sir . . . . . , who, though a well-meaning, spirited young man, and not without abilities, yet has partly so much of the modern coxcomb, and partly so much of the *sawney design* in the midst of his fine gentlemanship, that he entertained me with the affected familiarity but real servility and adulation with which he bored Fox, whose natural rejection but good-natured

[1] 'I have taken a lodging, No. 3 Pall Mall Court, which is extremely quiet and has the windows in Carlton Gardens. It is the one I once took for Mirabeau, and it was afterwards inhabited by Windham.'—*Sir Gilbert to Lady Elliot.*

[2] Lord Palmerston's.

[3] Mr. Henry Gally Knight's. 'Mrs. Gally,' he says in another letter, 'is always in light pleasant spirits, her conversation sensible and agreeable, her intentions obliging. Mr. Gally has better intentions than anybody, and is a friendly, upright, pious man; his conversation is in general very cheerful, too, but he is so busied about his virtue and Christianity that he is half morose, and has forgot the principal Christian virtue called charity, so that he seems often to think the man he converses with a rogue for not having such jumbled notions of duties, moral, political, and religious as himself.'

toleration of it was entertaining also in its way. There is a certain manner which it is as difficult and as rare for *nous autres* Scotchmen to get entirely rid of as to get quite right about *will* and *shall*. Besides him we had only young Dick Burke and an Irishman from India. I dine to-day with Mrs. Gally, to take leave of Harriet's *dear Alleyne*,[1] who goes to Ireland to-morrow, and everybody thinks with the greatest danger to his life, his health being very bad in itself, and such as the business and vexation he is going to *must* make much worse. Indeed a robust man, I think, might very fairly be allowed to die under the operation of Lord Buckingham's[2] conversation, pride, vanity, and dulness; and this is what Fitzherbert must retire to as a refuge from his other labours. In short, Fitzherbert's taste is so good and delicate, and his health so bad and delicate, that I think he cannot possibly survive it. That office requires nerves and bad taste, as Windham proved by flying from it.'

'Pall Mall Court: December 13, 1787.

'I was safely delivered, thank God, last night, and my friends and *gossips* say of a fine boy. My success on this occasion has very far exceeded my expectations before, and, indeed, my own opinion after; and if it had not been for the *general* expression of approbation,

[1] Alleyne Fitzherbert, created Lord St. Helens in 1791, died 1839, brother of Mrs. Gally Knight.

[2] George, first Marquis of Buckingham, Viceroy of Ireland in 1782, and again in 1787.

and for the particular *warmth* of my own friends in their applause, I should literally have come home very ill satisfied with myself, just as Windham did the day before, after making one of the finest appearances I ever saw in the House of Commons, and one that was more honourable to him, both as to abilities and character, than it is possible for me to express. It was on the motion for restoring Francis to the committee of managers; but you will probably not wish me to talk to you at present of other people. I assure you that the effect this appearance of mine has produced is such that I feel awkward in relating it even to you; but as it would be very unfair to punish you by these delicacies, I shall tell you a few of those circumstances which have given me most satisfaction in the event.—*First of all*, then, Burke is quite out of himself on the subject, and I am quite convinced that nobody on earth, except yourself, can feel as he does about it. His expressions as to the composition and delivery of it are extravagant, and I will not repeat them—"the most beautiful thing that ever was heard, divine, beyond human sweetness," and such like. For God's sake do not show this to anybody else, for it is a little too bad to repeat even to you, though I do not think it fair to rob you of anything that will give you pleasure. But Burke's praises in other points, which I think more material, are really both pleasing and affecting to me—in a word, as to the *substantial* points which go to *character*. I went home with him afterwards to dinner, and he could not at all contain himself. He

was darting every now and then across the room to embrace me. At dinner, without any provocation, he had his hand every now and then across the dishes to take my hand. From the rest of his family you will believe I had a warm reception, when I tell you that the passage of my speech which was by far the most admired was a panegyric on Burke, which *you know* did indeed come from the heart, and which I have long had it in my mind to acquit myself of once in my life, as a debt due to unsuccessful virtue. That beast Lord M. said to somebody that this passage was much finer than the finest part of the finest speech he had ever heard delivered. Now, I'll tell you, *with literal truth*, that there was nothing either difficult or fine in the matter; but it may serve to prove what a powerful ingredient in eloquence a *sincere feeling* in the speaker is. The night before there was a latish House, after which I dined at Burke's about nine o'clock at night, and got to bed about eleven a good deal tired, as I always am now after sitting a few hours in that stew the House of Commons. I woke at three in the morning *sick* and feverish, and really expected to have been disabled from appearing. I did not get a wink more of sleep, which was owing no doubt chiefly to anxiety. I went to the House at a quarter after four, and sat there till almost six, in expectation every minute of being turned off. This was a long time to sit under the gallows, and I do assure you I could not help revolving all sorts of melancholy notions the greatest

part of that time. I knew the sort of expectation which the greatness of the subject, the length of the preparation, and the partiality of my particular friends had raised; and I felt pretty sure that the moment was come when I was to kick it all down, and disgrace myself and them. My voice was very much weakened and muddled, as it were, either by my stomach or my fears, so that I did not expect to be well heard, and my mouth was as dry as parchment, in spite of an orange which I kept sucking. All this was before I began. About a quarter of an hour after I had begun, and was going on tolerably prosperously, as I supposed, beginning to feel my spirits flow pretty freely, some unaccountable panic came across me, and I became a sheet of white paper, without a single idea remaining, either of what I had said or of what was to follow. I stood motionless and silent for a time, which *seemed to me* about the length of a moderate sermon, during which time my friends suffered the pains of hell, and I was not absolutely in heaven myself. After swearing at my stupidity and cowardice a little in a whisper to Charles Fox, who sat next me, and after taking a suck of my orange to put off time, it all came suddenly back to me, just as it had gone away, without my being able to give any sort of account either of its departure or return. You need not be very unhappy about this little halt, as it is a thing that happens to everybody, and never does the smallest prejudice. During the speech Windham's voice, from a few benches behind, was wonderfully cordial and cheering to me. The

attention of the rest of the House literally suppressed the usual expression of their approbation by *hear, hear*: and the gallery took such an interest in it, that when somebody was walking down the House, so as to make a little noise with his feet, the *strangers* called out *Hush, hush*, from the gallery. I am told that Burke, during what I said of him, was affected so as to drop almost off his seat, and that he shrank down into half his size. This fact, thank God! was universally received, not only with applause of the manner of saying it, but with an approbation and sympathy and general consent of the whole House as to the matter. I had the honour of squeezing tears also from several, of whom Dudley Long was one. . . . I was so much afraid of meeting the phalanx of eyes pointed at me all round the House, that I did not face them, and spoke almost entirely towards the Speaker, who, thank God! is not very searching or distressing by his attention, but is as quiet and harmless a sovereign as King Log. . . . After I had done, and the House rose, I had as great a crowd on my back, and as great a flocking to shake hands, as I walked down the House, almost as Sheridan on his triumph. The manner of everybody was changed to me, and it was easy to perceive that I had got on higher ground. The *shabby* people proved it as well in their way as the heartiness of my friends. In short, the success was complete. This morning I have not had time hardly to write this from the agreeable interruption of congratulating friends. Francis

is in ecstasy. Pelham tells me that he never heard Fox talk in such a strain of anything; that he dined at Brookes's; and that nothing else was spoken of—everybody repeating passages as they could remember them. Fox is excessively desirous that I should print it, but I am extremely unwilling for several reasons, besides any doubts I may have; that which will do very well when spoken with feeling may not read as well in cold blood. I have sent you about enough for a *modest* man, but it is all your due, and therefore I have determined not to scrimp you. I do really think this letter by far too much to show anybody else. It is written really as a duty to you, and for your gratification alone.'[1]

'Saturday, December 15, 1787.

'My honours are still in their bloom, and every hour produces some food for my vanity, so you will be pleased not to wonder if I come down as proud of my parts as Gilbert. I dined yesterday with Dudley Long. The party were—Charles Fox, Mr. Grey, Lord George Cavendish, Windham, Long's brother (who, by-the-by, is married and has a son), myself, Lord Maitland, and

[1] Lady Elliot was in the habit of reading portions of her husband's letters to his uncles, and to their sister, Miss Elliot, who was also an interested listener to the London news, sent down by a nephew to whom she was fondly attached; hence the occasional injunctions given by Sir Gilbert to his wife 'to keep' certain passages 'for herself alone.' She mentions in one of her letters that Mr. Elliot listened with great attention to the general news, but maintained a strict silence whenever she read any passage relating to Sir Gilbert's successes—the ex-governor never having been able cordially to forgive his nephew the part he had taken during the discussions in Parliament on the American war.

Tom Pelham. The conversation ran still very much on the glories of the three preceding days in the House of Commons, which are supposed to have been all creditable to our party. Charles Fox, who is not apt to praise to anybody's face, said nothing about me one way or other (although I had heard his opinion from others) till we had sat a considerable time after dinner and began to *open* a little, when, talking of one of the topics I had treated, he broke out with the most violent expressions of admiration I have undergone yet from anybody. He swore that, "No, by G—, there never was anything so *entirely perfect* as Sir Gilbert's speech!" and then he went on with passages of it, just as if he had spoken it himself. You may imagine whether this testimony is tickling to me or not. I have *all* of them fairly on my side, and am most puffed by those formidable wits and critics of whom I have always stood in awe, more than was quite *noble* perhaps. I mean *Hare*, who is as vehement as anybody, Fitzpatrick, and such fine gentlemen; and I have the pleasure of seeing that all these testimonies in my favour are not mixed nor poisoned by the least degree of jealousy or envy in anybody. Windham, on the contrary, and Pelham seemed as highly delighted at Fox's breaking out in the way I have mentioned as you could have been, and as much pleased that I should have no means left after this of doubting about the figure I had made, and the opinion of people on the subject. . . .

'The last entertainment of the political world here

has been a letter written by Lord Westcote[1] to Lord North, in which, after repeating his assurances of regard and devotion to Lord North, he informs his honour that, as his Lordship (Lord North) is now in so *deplorable* a situation, he cannot take it amiss if he (Lord Westcote) should avail himself of his opportunities to carry some very desirable points for himself by attaching himself to his friend Mr. Pitt. There was a dinner at the Speaker's last Sunday of our party, to which Lord Westcote was invited, his going over not being known to the Speaker when he sent out his cards. At this dinner everybody present exercised their wit on Lord Westcote in the way of practical jokes. The best of these was Hare's, who asked the Speaker from the other end of the table, so as to have a silence made and great attention, whether he had heard of a curious anecdote, which had happened that week in Westminster Hall, and the Speaker saying No, Hare told a story, invented on the spot for the occasion, of a *train-bearer* of Lord Mansfield's who had just written a letter to Lord Mansfield, in which, after thanking his Lordship for having given him bread, and made his fortune, all his life, he added that, however, as his Lordship had now fallen into so deplorable a *situation* he could not take it amiss if he went to offer his services to Sir Lloyd Kenyon. At the word *deplorable* there was a universal horse-laugh, except only from Lord Westcote and the Speaker, the latter of whom did not yet know the event

[1] Lord Westcote, Lord of the Treasury under Lord North.
['Obedient Westcote hail'd the Treasury call.'—*Rolliad*, Jekyll.]

alluded to. Then Jack Anstruther called out, 'Mr. Speaker, have you heard of the *wonderful conversion?*' —another horse-laugh. The conversion he explained to be that of Lord George Gordon to *Jewism*, but he said the conversion of a *noble Lord to Jewism*. In short they had a knock at him all round.'

'Pall Mall Court: December 22, 1787.

'I am sorry you had so much waiting, and so many lookings-out before you received the accounts of my *delivery*. . . . My own gratification in all that has happened is certainly at least doubled by the certainty I have of your enjoyment being equal to my own; and the whole is very much increased by contrasting the event with my expectations, and with the possibility of a very different issue. I can hardly now conceive that it is my own doing, and I feel like a person who has drawn a fortunate ticket in a lottery where neither prizes nor blanks depended upon anything to be done by himself. I used frequently to think, before the event, how I should feel in case of failure, and I have in those moments turned my thoughts to a quiet though inglorious retreat—to my roads, bridges, books, brats, and wives—which appears to me, after all, no such bad way of being *ruined* . . . but, besides the mortification of my aunt at the disgrace of Minto, I could not help recollecting that you would be mortified also; and although I know you would in all events be as good a wife as if I had proved a good orator, yet I apprehended that you might too naturally find it in-

different fun to pass your life in fondling and bearing children with a blockhead.'

If Lady Elliot could have entertained any doubt of the triumphant success of her husband's speech, it would have been removed by the following cordial letters from Mr. Burke and Mr. Windham. Of the first she wrote that 'she would preserve it to be shown to later generations,' and the second was no less gratifying to Sir Gilbert:—

Edmund Burke to Lady Elliot.

'December 13, 1787.

'My dear Madam,—I have been indisposed for a few days, but I should have been ill indeed if the medicine of yesterday had not wrought a perfect cure on me. This morning I rise in health and spirits; and the first thing I do is the pleasantest thing I can do, which is to congratulate you on the honour acquired by Sir Gilbert Elliot in the commencement of his great undertaking, which is complete indeed, without the least drawback or qualification whatsoever. I am persuaded that, delightful as our excellent friend is to every human creature that knows him, and most so to those who know him best, yet you will not regret his absence, which has produced such effects, and which will make his virtues and talents as well known to the world as they are now to the circle of his friends.[1] . . . What

[1] Mr. Burke here enters into a disquisition on the component parts of the speech, which is omitted.

I have never before seen, never I am sure in an equal degree, the method, the arguments, the sentiments, the language, the manner, the action, the tone and modulation of voice, were all exactly of a piece, belonging each to the other, so that they were all peculiarly his own, and not copied from any original we have seen in our own time in the whole or in any part. . . . There was not a topic upon which he touched that had not its peculiar beauty and the finishing hand of a master. . . . You will not wonder that taste should be a reigning quality in any performance of his. . . . Accept my warmest congratulations, and believe me, my dear madam, your most obedient servant,

'EDM. BURKE.'

William Windham to Lady Elliot.

'Hill Street: December 18, 1787.

'Dear Lady Elliot,—You will not object to a new correspondent, who is forced into existence by his admiration of what he heard last night from Sir Gilbert. It is right that you should receive your impressions through some representation more fair than his own. You may be quite assured that the most partial of his friends could not have raised their ideas beyond the excellence of the performance, or the most sanguine have extended their hopes beyond the credit it has obtained. You must prepare your laurels for him, at his return, as for a man who has ennobled himself, exalted the reputation of the party he belongs to, and made, by the confession of everybody, one of the

grandest displays of character and talents ever heard in Parliament.—I am, with great truth, your most obedient and faithful servant,

'W. WINDHAM.'

Sir G. Elliot to Lady Elliot.

'Pall Mall Court: Thursday, December 27, 1787.

'Burke's letter is a testimony worth preserving indeed. I wish the figures he got into about colours, tints, varnish, &c. may not have weakened the reverence of my uncles for this *oracle*, as they are probably neither of them very great admirers of these sorts of indulgence in writing, and may perhaps see a little ridicule in it. The account, however, which he gives of my performance is very fine, and far surpasses the thing he was describing. . . I feel excessively grateful to Windham for this mark of partiality to me, and still more for his attention to you. It is the more to be valued as I know writing at all is an effort to him, and he is not at all the sort of man who makes a *phrase*, as we say in Scotland, on any motive of interest or affection.'

'Pall Mall Court: January 3, 1788.

'This letter, my dearest Maria, will be a most shabby affair, for I have been out all the morning, and a considerable part of it, in an engagement which I ought not to plead as a good excuse for defrauding you of your *dues*. It was to accompany Francis' daughters, at least the two youngest of them, to Sir Joshua Reynolds' to see Windham's picture, and the great picture of

Hercules for the Empress of Russia. That you may not be too uneasy, however, Francis himself was of the party. Windham is the god they worship and swear by in that family; and with very good reason, for his defence of Francis, and the appearance he made on that occasion, were titles enough both to the gratitude and affection of the house of Francis, and to general fame. You know it was the day before my benefit. His picture is a good head, and has a very strong and lively expression of his countenance and character, but does not appear to me so perfect as Sir Joshua's masterpieces. The Hercules is an immense picture, intended to be seen at a great distance. It is full of effect—splendid to the greatest degree in the colouring, and grand in the composition. Large, however, as the canvas is, the number and size of the figures is so great, and there is such a variety of actions and business in it, that it certainly appears crowded, and though a work of great genius, and worthy of the best living painter, will probably be the subject of a good deal of criticism. I think, however, it will be impossible not to admire the Young Hercules himself and his little mortal brother. I had at the same time the happiness of seeing your agreeable phiz, which is still exhibited in the picture-room.'

'Pall Mall Court: January 12, 1788.

'The Chancellor has said that Hastings' trial will be over in six weeks, which shows his intention at least to make a short session of it. It is true this is not in his, or

in any other man's power when once the business is in possession of the public. In the meanwhile the preparations are in great forwardness. I went into Westminster Hall the other day and saw the scaffolding erecting. It seems already so forward as that we might begin to-morrow if we liked. Sir Peter Burrell has the conduct of all this business, and the disposal of tickets for the trial. He is High-Chamberlain, you know, in right of his wife,[1] who is hereditary High-Chamberlain of England. The Peers will have a certain number of tickets to dispose of each; but neither the members of the House of Commons, and not even the managers, will have any, although we shall probably be indulged with a reasonable number. Tickets and places will be indeed cheap enough if the business lasts as long as it is likely to do, and we shall probably act at last to empty benches. I own the prospect I have of being a principal performer in this theatre does not give me the most agreeable sensation; and when I think of opening and conducting Impey's impeachment in the face of a thousand full-dressed strangers, half of whom will be ladies, I could wish to be the culprit myself and to speak by the mouth of my counsel. . . . I dined yesterday at Dudley Long's, with Grey, Anstruther, Graham, the counsel, Dick Thomson, and Roger Wilbraham. It was pleasant, as everything in Long's company is; and his dinners are remarkably handsome and well served. Grey is a very clever, spirited, and

[1] Lady Elizabeth Bertie, daughter of the last Duke of Ancaster.

pleasant man, and extremely ripe indeed for his age. We sat till past eleven, by which time all the company were in spirits except me, who, by drinking port, drank what I pleased—that is to say, had not the *circulation* of my bottle to draw me on. I find the least quantity of claret always affects my stomach, and consequently sinks my spirits instead of the usual effect of wine, which I believe in this age is an advantage, for the men of all ages drink abominably. How the men of business and the great orators of the House of Commons, contrive to reconcile it with their public exertions I cannot conceive. Fox drinks what I should call a great deal, though he is not reckoned to do so by his companions, Sheridan excessively, and Grey more than any of them; but it is in a much more gentleman-like way than our Scotch drunkards, and is always accompanied with clever lively conversation on subjects of importance. Pitt, I am told, drinks as much as anybody, generally more than any of his company, and that he is a pleasant convivial man at table. I send you Ellis's Tales[1]—Sir Gregory Gander—which Harriet

[1] George Ellis, Esq., a contributor to the *Rolliad*, coadjutor of Mr. Canning and Mr. Frere in the *Anti-Jacobin*, editor of *Specimens of Ancient English Romances*, and author of some metrical tales. Sir Walter Scott, in the fifth Canto of *Marmion*, addresses him in the well-known lines :—

'Thou who canst give to lightest lay
An unpedantic moral gay,
Nor less the dullest theme bid flit
On wings of unexpected wit;
In letters as in life approv'd,
Example honoured and beloved,
Dear Ellis!' etc. etc.

'It is not generally known that George Ellis originated both the very

has just sent me from Bath. I really never read anything so clever, so lively, and so light before. . . . Usbeck is Harriet's favourite.'

'January 22, 1788.

'The play was Lear. Mrs. Siddons was very fine as usual in Cordelia, and gave as much dignity and interest to the part as it is capable of. Edgar was extremely well played by Wroughton, who in some of the scenes with her, and particularly in the *mad Tom parts*, gave me almost all the pleasure I had. Kemble was a very poor and even bad Lear indeed. He made it either dead flat or almost ludicrous, and let down a very dignified, though a weak character, to that of a very silly doating old greybeard. He dressed himself out in his fantastical way, with a long white beard half-way down his breast, and looked, with his high hat and other accoutrements, more like a conjuror at a masquerade, or a pantaloon, than like Lear. The passages in which people were falling down all round the house in fits, as in Garrick's time, were not even perceived at all distinguishable from the rest; and as there are always many barbarisms and absurdities to be forgiven in the old plays which are redeemed only by the force and energy of the characters and writing, the effect of

cleverest collections of political wit on different sides, Whig and Tory, the *Rolliad* and the *Anti-Jacobin*. The *Rolliad* at first hung fire till it was taken up by Dr. Lawrence, the dullest of speakers in the House of Commons, but in private full of the truest wit.'—*Extract from a letter from the Very Rev. H. Milman, Dean of St. Paul's, to Lady Minto, August* 11, 1868.

Kemble's weakness and poverty in representing the character was to let down the whole play into a rhapsody of childishness and nonsense, and to make one blush inwardly at seeing Monsieur Calonne and some eminent foreigners judging Shakespeare and the national taste by such a specimen. I felt the more hurt at this failure from the strong impression I retain of Garrick's excellence, and my own extreme admiration, as well as feelings, at the former representations of this play, which I have always considered not only as one of the grandest poems, but the finest and the highest dramatic entertainment existing. Notwithstanding all this, there were particular moments in which I admired Kemble, and felt strongly the effect of the scene. As I don't know whether you remember Garrick in Lear (*being younger*, thank God! than me), and as you were not at the play yesterday, perhaps all this may be a bore to you; but I can only speak to you of what I see, and besides this may serve as a recorded opinion of this important point which may amuse and interest one by-and-by, when politics are discarded, and poetry and criticism have taken their place, which I sometimes feel disposed to look to as a prospect of comfort—though I allow it ought to be a remote one—and Burke would knock me down for so ignoble a sentiment; although I keep it far off, and even below the present horizon, yet it seems a good resource for filling up by-and-by the vacancies of these youthful and middle-aged passions, love and ambition, and better surely than avarice. In the next box sat "a

youthful loving pair"—Lord Wentworth and Lady Ligonier. Their union is fixed, and such a couple of carcases were never seen together; neither of them will have a right to complain that the famous tyranny of Syracuse has been exercised on them by chaining a live body to a dead one. There is another marriage just declared which sounds rather more Syracusan, for one of the parties is alive—Lord Aylesbury, and Lady Ann Rawdon, sister to Lord Rawdon, and thirty-one years old. Lord Aylesbury, by the peerage, is sixty-eight, but some say he is not quite so much. Everybody calls her a very good and pleasant sort of woman, who will make him a very good wife, which Mrs. Gally says makes the case just so much the worse, for if she were disagreeable one would care less what becomes of her, and if she were good for nothing she might find comfort with somebody else, and so not be quite so ill off.'

'February 6, 1788.

'My health was drunk again at the Whig Club yesterday, but I did not go there myself, being unwilling to risk a long dinner with more wine than is good for me when I have occasion for all my wits. . . .'

'Pall Mall Court: Tuesday, February 12, 1788.

'Hastings' trial comes on to-morrow, and my new dressed coat is just come home. The managers[1] are

[1] The managers were—Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Windham, Grey, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Mr. Adam, Sir J. Erskine, Dudley Long, Esq., Thomas Pelham, etc.

to be in full dress every morning by ten o'clock; my coat is drab and *vig-o-gne* (?) with steel buttons: waistcoat of the same.'

'Pall Mall Court: Wednesday, February 13, 1788.

'I am this instant returned from Westminster Hall, and have hardly a moment to tell you anything about it. It is difficult to conceive anything more grand or imposing than this scene, and the grandeur of the show merely, which is very great in itself, is infinitely increased by the reflection who the *pageants* in this procession and theatre are, and what they are there for. Everything that England possesses of greatness or ability is there assembled, in the utmost splendour and solemnity, for one of the most solemn and interesting purposes imaginable. This centre-dish is garnished with all the beauty and magnificence which the female part of England can furnish, excepting only a *gem* now set in the *Calton Hill*.[1]

'The appearance of the hall is, I take it for granted, less splendid than it was on the Duchess of Kingston's trial, because one whole side is appropriated to the House of Commons, who are in frocks, and are not adorned by the mixture of ladies. This cause, however, is so much more noble than the intrigues and exploits of an old ——, and there is something so grand

[1] Lady Elliot had removed from Minto to Edinburgh, and Sir Gilbert congratulated himself on his being now able to hear from her by the regular posts three times a week, with a chance of a letter in the intervals; to Minto there were but two weekly posts.

in the attendance of the House of Commons as a party and prosecutor on this occasion, that I think the difference rather in favour of the present trial, although the eye may have been better off in the former one. There is a large place for the managers fronting the throne, with a table and accommodation for our counsel, agents, and attendants. We, I mean the managers, all went in full dress. Hastings' box adjoins to ours, and is in the centre opposite to the Chancellor's, as ours is. Beyond his is a box for his counsel and agents, and beyond that a box for the witnesses. We have a retiring-room down a dark stair, where are kept the books and papers, etc. . . . I never saw Hastings till to-day, and had not formed anything like a just idea of him. I never saw a more miserable-looking creature, but indeed he has so much the appearance of bad health that I do not suppose he resembles even himself. He looks as if he could not live a week. I always feel uncomfortable in the reflection of his connections with Alick, and I cannot say I was insensible to that idea on seeing him to-day. But the clearness of his guilt and the atrociousness of his crimes can leave no hesitation in anybody's mind, who thinks as I do about him, what one's duty is. This day has consisted entirely in ceremony. Burke will not begin his opening till the day after to-morrow.'

'Friday, February 15, 1788.

'I am just returned from the trial. Burke has done nobly, and with the most universal admiration, and

they say also with great effect and impression. He spoke only two hours and a half, and confined himself to a sort of general introduction and view of the subject.

'He gave, therefore, a complete history of the origin, constitution, and progress of the East India Company, with an account of the system and regulations established by them for the conduct of their servants. He then gave a description of India, its revolutions, its inhabitants, customs, laws, and manners, and with this he concluded for to-day.'

'Great Russell Street: February 18, 1788.

'Burke has exceeded his former excesses to-day, and in one of his excesses he did not, I believe, leave a dry eye in the whole assembly. Mrs. Sheridan had a fit on the occasion; Burke was cut short by a violent cramp in the stomach, got probably by drinking cold water every now and then as he spoke.'[1]

'Westminster Hall: February 22, 1788.

'The House of Lords decided yesterday the first point that has been submitted to them plump against us,[2] and in the debate the Chancellor and several other

[1] 'Four sittings were occupied by his opening speech (Burke's), which was intended to be a general introduction to all the charges.'—*Lord Macaulay's Essay on Warren Hastings.*

[2] The Lords supported the wish of Hastings that all the charges should be opened before the defence, in opposition to the accusers, who desired that the investigation of the first charge should be closed before the second was opened.

peers spoke with the most decided hostility, not only against this impeachment, but against all impeachments, as founded in party and such like. . . .

'Fox is now, and has been these two hours more, pleading the first charge, and doing it with all his own ability. He gave the Chancellor a severe dressing for his speech in the House of Lords yesterday, though it was done in such a way as made it impossible to stop him. . . .

'The glory and distinction which the leading members of Opposition are acquiring in the face of the whole kingdom, and of all foreigners male and female, cannot be an agreeable sight to Pitt, who is excluded from this theatre of fame.'

'Westminster Hall: February 25, 1788.

'I have just heard a very great performance indeed from young Grey, who has been seconding Fox on the first charge,[1] and has acquired a fund of reputation to last his life.'

March 1.

'The trial was adjourned yesterday to April 10. After the House we all dined at nine o'clock at the Crown and Anchor—Fox treating us.'

'March 3, 1788.

'The adjournment of the trial has indeed been felt by this whole metropolis as a breaking-up for the holidays is by schoolboys and schoolgirls, for besides

[1] Respecting Cheyte Sing.

the managers, the Lords, and the person accused, all the fine ladies and many of the fine gentlemen were on duty, which, considering the revolution in their hours and ways of life, must have been as severe a campaign as Coxheath or Warley were to the militia. The ladies were up at six every morning, to dress and breakfast so as to be at Westminster Hall by nine o'clock. They waited there shivering, without either fires or beaux to warm them, till eleven, when the managers made their appearance. They were followed by the procession of Peers, and by the pouring in of the Commons. Then business began not much before twelve, and lasted till it was too dark to read, and the last day it was literally pitch dark, so that one could not distinguish one's next neighbour. Michael Angelo Taylor's speech was spoken wholly in the dark, insomuch that nobody could guess who was speaking. . . . I told you that I walked to Kensington with Burke, Windham, and *Wells*,[1] whom I have made acquainted with most of my friends and who is extremely liked by them all. I dined in Russell Street, after dinner came home and dressed for the opera, which was my second performance on that stage this year, and I never saw such a crowd. After the opera I got squeezed in the coffee-room against Mrs. Fitzherbert, in such a way that it was impossible to make my escape from her for ten minutes, though neither of us knew whether to take notice of the other or not; and, accordingly, all I had

[1] William Elliot of Wells.

to do was to amuse myself with considering this sham queen, and what it was that could make her triumph over all the youth and beauty of England. I could not, however, discover the cause of so much power, although I think she looks much handsomer this year than I ever remember her. I squeezed away just as the Prince and the Duke of York arrived at her, the room made for them favouring my escape. Poor Mrs. —— was still hovering about with a mortified melancholy look, though I confess I feel no more sympathy for her prudent bosom than I do admiration for the *prominence* of her successful rival. Lord John carried your two lovers, Tom Pelham and me, to sup at Mrs. Crewe's, where we had Windham, Ellis, Lord Downe, George Conway, and several others. The only fault of these suppers is they begin so late that I at least am dead asleep before they begin. I got home at half after two in the morning.'

'Pall Mall Court: March 5, 1788.

'I dined yesterday at the Whig Club, which was just like all other numerous dinners of men, and only so much better than a race ordinary as the room was finer, and the service something more gentlemanlike. It was at Almack's, where I think I have hardly been since you and I were lovers. I heard Captain Morris for the first time sing two of his political songs, and he came fully up to my expectations.'

During the Easter recess Sir Gilbert paid a hurried

visit to Minto, and on his way back to London assisted at the marriage of his younger brother 'Bob,' which took place at Stilton, Yorkshire,[1] whence he wrote:—

'York: April 7, 1788.

'I have been fagging terribly at my business in the charge, and have indulged myself but now and then with thinking *back* on what I left behind me . . . but I shall certainly languish most languishingly after pleasant Teviotside, and shall never see the sunshine without a wistful thought of buds, and young leaves, and singing birds, besides the pleasant smell of your lavender, and Gilbert's gunpowder and crackers.'

The marriage took place on the 9th, and Sir Gilbert went up to London on the following day.

'Pall Mall Court: April 29, 1788.

'I am, thank God! delivered of a great part of my burthen. My business came on yesterday,[2] and I spoke four hours and a quarter, without, however, getting through anything like half my subject. The impossibility of finishing it in one speech has made it necessary to divide it, and I am to go on with the remainder on Wednesday se'nnight, there being no vacant day

[1] The Rev. Robert Elliot, rector of Wheldrake, county York, married Mary, daughter of the Rev. Edmund Garforth, of Uskham, county York.

[2] On April 28 the House of Commons resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider the several articles of charge of high crimes and misdemeanours against Sir E. Impey.—*Parl. Hist.* vol. xxvii. p. 291.

sooner. You may be perfectly satisfied with my appearance in point of credit to myself, although it certainly had not, as I prepared you to expect, the same sort of merit, nor the same degree of success with the former. . . . The matter is indeed immense, and is much larger than is fit to be laid before such an assembly, or any other numerous audience; but the cause requires it. . . . Burke is, as usual, in superlatives about it, and my particular friends, I believe, really approve of my work; yet the general reception of this performance neither was, nor really could be, so flattering as that of the other. . . . Elliot[1] has been a great comfort, and of much assistance to me all through. His affectionate manner, and the interest he takes in all this, in his quiet way, does not make me less in love with him than I was.'

'Pall Mall Court: April 30, 1788.

'Wells and I have been making use of our holiday to see sights, and we have passed this forenoon at three exhibitions of pictures, two of which are old pictures for sale, and the third is the Royal Academy. Sir Joshua's great picture for the Empress is the only fine thing in the historical way, and I think it by far the finest picture I ever saw of a modern master. There are also a great many very fine portraits of his. The finest, and I really think the finest portrait I ever saw, is our chief, Lord Heathfield; and Windham is extremely fine also for likeness and character, but is not so magnificent a subject or style as the other. Harriet

[1] Of Wells.

is there, and I still like it extremely, although there is a degree of false expression about it. Something of conceit about the expression of the mouth and lower part of the face; it is also a little fatter and more puffy about the face than she; with all this, however, it is extremely like and very pleasing. She has nothing on her head, but something in the way of the dress of yours[1]—viz. a black cloak thrown as drapery about her—and she is in a sort of rocky background. . . . Looking at so many pictures is fatiguing and distracting, and both Wells and I are a little tired with this first day's pleasure.'

'Pall Mall Court: Saturday, May 10, 1788.

'You may at last wish me joy of having completely finished this labour. I concluded my opening yesterday. We were beat yesterday, but our defeat is very like a victory. Sir E. Impey had his own personal friends, the lawyers, in a body—that is to say, fifteen of them out of twenty who were present, the *whole Indian corps*, Lord Lansdowne's squadron, and the whole force of the Ministry: and with all this he could raise a majority of only 18. The numbers were 55 to 73, and we lost Francis, who could not vote for a point of delicacy, and also Sir G. Cornewall, who *was in the chair*. . . . . The debate was still more triumphant than the division, and we brought Pitt and his lawyers and friends to the greatest disgrace. Pitt never exposed himself and his profligacy in so great a degree before. My share in it has been successful beyond my most san-

[1] Lady Elliot's picture by Sir Joshua.

guine expectations. I was fortunate enough to conclude with an affecting passage. I had tears and violent emotions all round me as before, and my powers certainly went very far beyond any idea I could have formed of them myself. Dudley Long was one of the weepers, Adam another, and indeed the whole House and gallery were worked up to an extraordinary degree of feeling and emotion. . . . The debate began yesterday at half-past six with me, and I spoke till ten. Then a little disturbance happened by Sir J. Johnstone's being drunk, and the debate then proceeded till about seven or half after seven this morning. . . . Wells was in the gallery the whole time, and you cannot conceive his happiness and delight, and the spirits he is in, partly with Pitt's disgrace by the profligacy of his conduct and the badness of his speech, but principally on account of the credit he thinks I have got, and the effect he observed of my speech on everybody about him. His attachment and its warmth are quite inexpressible, and are even entertaining. There was one part of my speech in which he imagined, though without any particular reason, that I was likely to get disconcerted or find myself at a loss, and during the whole of the passage he leant over the gallery with his face crammed quite into the crown of his hat, and he never ventured to set it free till I had weathered the danger he expected. . . . He is loved by Burke, I believe, next to myself, and is admired and doated on by all my friends, with whom he lives as much as I do. He certainly has been a great blessing to me, and the blessing, as you say, I believe

is mutual, for it is impossible for two people to suit each other so entirely as we do, and there appears to be a very singular *fitness*, as it were, between us.'

'May 17, 1788.

'I continue to send you the "Morning Chronicle" as generally containing the best account of the debates. It is astonishing what these reporters are able to do by memory, but the best of them are not only very defective indeed, but also thoroughly mistaken and false in many important points; and although you find here and there a few of the separate phrases and expressions retained, yet there is no one sentence by which it is possible to form any just notion of the speaker's style or manner.'

'May 26, 1788.

'Sir James [1] has offended a dozen of people by playing the minister upon us about his tickets for the Knights' ball. He promised everybody that asked one, and even volunteered in offering them to those who did not ask, after he knew he had long promised more than he had. He had but six or seven in all, and he promised more than twenty. . . . You will hardly understand, in your wild savage woods, what a prodigious object these tickets have been, and what intriguing and caballing, and driving and note-writing there has been about them. Sir James used Lady Palmerston just in the same way, and she was very *wroth* indeed, and told him it would

[1] Harris.

be much pleasanter if he used a little more sincerity and plain dealing, and less of the foreign minister, in his intercourse with his private friends and society.'

'Pall Mall Court: May 28, 1788.

'I was at Ranelagh last night, where I saw nothing remarkable except the Duke of York and his love Lady Tyrconnel.

'The Palmerstons were at Ranelagh of course. . . . The last new story I heard was a dialogue between the King and his gardener, at Richmond or somewhere, the other day. The King on meeting him entered into conversation as usual, and said nearly these words:—"Poor Hastings, poor Hastings! they'll ruin him, they'll ruin him! Poor Hastings, poor Hastings! he'll be ruined, he'll be ruined!" Dr. Price, the calculator, and the principal friend of Lord Lansdowne, told this story to Wells, and whispered him he knew it to be true. By ruined he meant by the expense of the impeachment. It was a pretty subject for the conversation of a king with a gardener!

'Sheridan's speech will certainly be over next week—he begins on Tuesday. The expectation of the public, I believe, never rose so high on any subject before, and I have been told that tickets have been sold at twenty-five guineas a-piece.'

'Monday, June 2, 1788.

'. . . You have no conception of the rage and clamour for tickets for to-morrow's trial; at Mrs. Legge's people were almost putting their hands into one's pocket for

them. I went afterwards to Mrs. Crewe's, where, amongst others, I found Lord Macartney, who is as strong and explicit against Impey as I can be, and says that at Calcutta, when he was there, there was no doubt entertained of his guilt, and that he certainly hanged Nuncomar to screen Hastings. I was glad to hear this from him. . . . I supped at Mrs. Crewe's with only Windham, Mrs. Sheridan, and Mr. Davenport. Mrs. Crewe refined and double refined. Mrs. Sheridan was very pleasant in a plainer and more intelligible way. I went on Saturday, with James Harris, etc., to Sadler's Wells, and I believe the whole party was well amused.'

'Tuesday, June 3, 1788.

'It is not yet seven o'clock in the morning, and I expect Mrs. Morrice to call every moment on her way to Westminster Hall, where I am to accompany her, by way of saving some of her bones at the door getting in. She will have to mob it at the door till nine, when the doors open, and then there will be a rush as there is at the pit of the playhouse when Garrick plays King Lear. This will give you some notion of the expectation raised on this occasion. The ladies are dressed and mobbing it in Palace Yard by six or half after six, and they sit from nine till twelve before business begins. After seeing Mrs. Morrice safe in the Hall, I come in to dress as a manager, so this business is rather an operation. Some people, and, I believe, even women—I mean ladies—have slept at the coffee-houses adjoining

Westminster Hall, that they may be sure of getting to the door in time.

'. . . Since writing the above I have been to the Hall. We stood an hour and a half in the street in the mob, and at last the press was so terrible, that I think it possible I may have saved, if not her life, at least a limb or two. I could not, however, save her cap, which perished in the attempt. Shoes were, however, the principal and most general loss. Several ladies went in barefoot; others, after losing their own, got the stray shoes of other people, and went in with one red and one yellow shoe.'

'Pall Mall Court: Thursday, June 5, 1788.

'You will probably expect some account of Sheridan's speech, and it has been so capital an object for months past, that I should like to tell you something of it, both for your own gratification and as a memorial to recur to hereafter when we gossip of these things as belonging to old times. But I cannot undertake a criticism of his performance to-day, much less a report of what he said. . . . He spoke four hours and a half, and then paused till Friday (to-morrow), when he will certainly conclude. If I am to give my opinion quite sincerely, and to go no further than your own ear, I must say that I imagine a great majority of his audience was disappointed; and to speak truth yet more fully, I own I expected myself something more brilliant, more striking, and impressive than we received. The disappointment, however, if it exists, has been more

owing to the extravagance of public expectation, which has been screwing itself up without any consideration of reason or probability, and rather by its own operation on itself than by any rational principle. At first the public felt a strong curiosity to hear the repetition of a speech which made so much noise as his former one on the same subject in the House of Commons.[1] This occasioned early applications for tickets on this day, and that occasioned difficulty in obtaining them for everybody, and the difficulty increased the desire and the opinion of their value; and thus we went on, our curiosity and expectation lashing itself with its own tail into a rage, as lions are supposed to do. In the next place, by far the greatest part of the audience did not know what sort of excellence they were to expect, nor what is the nature of true excellence in such a performance. . . . They expected the same species of entertainment, or went in the same spirit of expectation, as if they were going to Garrick in Lear, or perhaps to the bottle conjuror. The knowledge of these expectations increased the difficulty of gratifying them by requiring a species of performance not in just character as a public man doing real business and addressing judges in a cause, but not performing to an audience as an actor; and it also, in some degree, weakened his powers by affecting his nerves and his courage. I think the circumstances in which Sheridan

[1] The success of that speech had been so great that Fox advised its repetition on this occasion, on the ground that it could not be surpassed; and it was not.

appears on this occasion must occasion a disadvantage for which there is no possible remedy. I mean that his coming on so much in the character of a favourite actor, called on by the public, for the gratification of their idle taste and pleasure, to give them a specimen and display of eloquence and oratory, must put the real business so much aside, and extinguish so entirely the true character in which he ought to stand, that, let his performance be what it will, it must lose, without redemption, the *effect* which belongs to real actual business, with the powerful impression and all the charms of sincerity and genuine feeling. If you were to form a judgment of Sheridan's speech on Tuesday from this unfavourable introduction, you would certainly be misled, and think much too low of it. It was a very great exertion of talent, understanding, and skill in composition, and was the work of a man of very extraordinary genius. There was not one sentence in which you did not perceive the exercise of a most ingenious, acute, penetrating, and lively mind; and it was strewed very thick with more brilliant periods of eloquence and poetical imagination, and more lively sallies of wit, than could be produced probably by more than one other man in the world, with whom, however, they spring up and shoot out with all the luxuriance and grace of spontaneous nature. This certainly cannot be said of Sheridan's flowers, which are produced by great pains, skill, and preparation, and are delivered in perfect order, ready tied up in regular

though *beautiful bouquets*, and very unlike Burke's wild and natural nosegays.

'I think in this respect that Sheridan's *excellence* becomes *perversely* a sort of defect; for the finer periods and passages are so *salient* from the rest, are so finished, and bear so strongly the evidence of regular and laborious composition produced by premeditation and delivered by memory, as to give the whole performance a character of design and artificial execution which keeps the author rather than his work, the orator rather than his speech, before you, which draws the attention entirely away from the *purpose* to the *performance*, and which can at most exercise the wonder and admiration of his audience, leaving both their passions and their judgment unaffected. Another great misfortune has been either a defect in his voice, or an error and mismanagement in his elocution. He was very imperfectly heard, and what was most unfortunate was that he was heard the worst in the most impassioned parts. Whenever he became particularly animated, and would place the strongest emphasis, he broke into a lower note—I do not mean less loud, but a *lower key*—the effect of which is to render the emphatical parts the *least* audible, for a sharper tone is heard with less exertion than a flatter one. He has been told of this, and will probably correct it. I do not think even *I* was more alarmed, or more oppressed, overcome, and subdued by fear, than he was when he began. He even lost his recollection entirely for a few moments. This, while it conciliates favour towards him, is likewise

gratifying to *other* cowards, who see their superiors labouring under similar infirmities. His exordium was, partly on this account, colder and less effective than I expected from him; but I think also that he had probably neglected too long to prepare this part of his speech, and, as it was to consist merely of general and trite topics, had perhaps trusted himself with too little preparation for so trying an occasion. I am convinced, on such occasions, the greatest men, and those who can depend the most securely on their powers, should yet always fairly launch themselves and set themselves afloat by preparation; they may afterwards trust their genius to blow and their judgment to steer them where they wish. I thought also that Sheridan starved his present argument a little by avoiding his former speech, which he was unwilling to repeat.

'. . . I must assure you that, though I have observed these imperfections and drawbacks, I admire this speech as one of the very finest and most surprising exertions of genius I ever witnessed.

'I must remind you that I am now writing rather a memorandum of my own thoughts for my own satisfaction, and for future use or amusement, than a letter to a correspondent, and that I write it to you only because we are not only one *flesh* but one *spirit*. There are the strongest reasons for my not expressing the slightest degree of disappointment, or showing any *faintness* in my praise and admiration of this performance. First, it would be really unjust to Sheridan to judge the whole by a part. . . . Next, as you see,

I cannot help still comparing him with my *own hero*, and, as I am known to be more particularly a worshipper of *another deity*, it might and certainly would expose Burke to the imputation of envy, or perhaps even of envious detraction, if his friends should be found disparaging Sheridan. All this is, you see, very confidential indeed. . . . I have not even trusted myself with Burke in this matter, and have assented to all the loud and unqualified praise which he is giving to it everywhere.

'. . . . I was yesterday put to one of the most scarlet blushes I ever experienced, so as to be obliged to hide my face in both my hands, though I confess the sensation was not without pleasure as well as distress, by the conversation turning suddenly, at Francis' table, where I dined, from Sheridan's speech to mine; I mean my last. They were talking with wonder of a man having strength and recollection to speak without interruption four hours and a half on the same subject, which naturally made them point to me as having spoken as long at three different times on the same subject. . . . This was expatiated on by Burke till I literally begged for mercy, and I was *really* distressed, whatever you may think of it. There is no doubt at all of these expressions of my success being very much exaggerated, and of both Burke and Francis being much influenced in their judgment by affection for me, and also by the gratification which their own praises gave them from my mouth; but as others have spoken pretty much in the same strain of it, and as it

would be impossible to hold such language if there were not *some* ground for praise, I may fairly enjoy the most unexpected, as to myself still the unaccountable, satisfaction of being named, compared, and classed with the first men. Now to talk of other matters. Sir James is very likely a peer at this moment. He expected it yesterday to take place to-day, but it was not absolutely settled, though quite settled that it is to be. The title is to be Malmesbury, which it seems is at no great distance from some of his land. I went last night to Ranelagh with Burke and the Francis family. It was a very good and pleasant Ranelagh, which it seems is generally the case on the King's birthday.'

'Pall Mall Court: June 7, 1788.

'My prediction has been fully accomplished, and Sheridan displayed powers yesterday hardly to be conceived, and perhaps never equalled in their kind. He spoke three hours and a half, but did not conclude, and he is to proceed on Tuesday, when we may expect him yet to surpass even himself, for the most affecting part of the subject yet remains, besides the exertion that is to be expected in the winding up of such a subject. . . . He was infinitely better, and, indeed, perfectly well heard yesterday, by a better management of his voice, although it was much more fatigued, and his chest seemed quite broke down, as it were, with the exertion. He had been extremely ill the night before, and had strained himself by vomiting so severely as to make it doubtful whether he would be able to

speak at all. I believe that he has suffered as much from anxiety, labour, and nervousness even as me. The character of his speech yesterday was the same as that of the day before, and indeed of all his great appearances—that is to say, acute and forcible and close reasoning, delivered in easy but perfectly lucid language, and relieved and enlivened by epigrammatic points, and by sallies of wit, both of the higher and the more familiar kind. This is the ground, as it were, and there is no part of the work which is less excellent than that I have described. But on this ground are added innumerable beautiful ornaments, and the principal of these are so splendid, so rich, and so exquisitely finished, as to excel the most extravagant notions of perfection. These splendid passages are all most elaborately composed, but they are composed by a person warm with his subject, and inspired by the occasion and the audience for which they are intended, and therefore do not partake in any degree of the coldness generally belonging to this artificial fire. He rises on these occasions to a pitch above any specimens we have of oratory, and soars fairly into the highest regions of poetry.

'. . . The grand defect (of this speech) is that of his general style of speaking, of which I took notice in my last letter, and which I dwelt on more strongly there, because that defect was not so well compensated for by the perfection of the execution as yesterday. The defect I mean is that the fine parts, which stand out so much from the rest, and which are therefore

almost alone retained—deciding by that means the character of the whole, although in reality forming but a small part of that whole—are composed too laboriously, too accurately as to language, depart too much from the style and arrangement of words, as well as from the choice of the words themselves, commonly used in oral discourse even of the highest, most solemn, and most animated kind, and they bear by this means too near a resemblance to the higher kind of *theatrical* composition to be perfectly becoming or satisfactory in real affairs, which, though generally treated in a less artificial and even less lofty strain than these fictions, are, however, infinitely of higher rank and dignity than those mere exercises of imagination and genius which Sheridan would make his speeches resemble. I object to the style of these fine parts, therefore, first, as deviating from that which is *proper* to the occasion into that which is not, and next as deviating from that which is in its own nature the higher into that which is in its own nature the lower, although its dress and decorations are certainly the most gaudy of the two. But I object to it besides as bearing too evidently the marks of deliberate and cold-blood preparation just where the utmost degree of real passion and fire is to be represented. The previous and *considerate* study, and the present animation and fire, are both before you at once, and are confounding and counteracting each other. One is disposed to call out, like the countryman at a conjuror's, "I see how that's done." There is no denying that this defect is to be found in

Sheridan's speaking, and it most certainly is felt by the judicious part of his audience, whom it annoys and distresses just in proportion as the perfection of the execution and the victory obtained by it over our feelings make us wish to admit no abatement in our admiration. This defect is rendered somewhat more observable by something rather theatrical in his voice and the management of his tones. When I have said this I must add that I am now convinced, however, that his powers in this kind are far beyond any other man's, and that nobody living could execute what he did yesterday. . . .

'Burke also abounds with these fine passages, and he soars also as much out of the lower regions of discourse, and infinitely further into those of imagination and fancy; but no man could ever perceive in him the least trace of preparation, and he never appears more incontestably inspired by the moment, and transported with the fury of the god within him, than in those finished passages which it would cost *Shakespeare* long study and labour to produce. Fox's speaking, which excels all other men's in its kind, is also *wholly* free from this defect, nature and simplicity being indeed the true characteristic quality of his eloquence; but the comparison is not so fair in his instance, because he does not deal in those brilliant periods, which seem in so singular a way to require indispensably both premeditation and the absence of it.

'You need not be afraid of a third criticism after Tuesday, as I have, I think, now pretty nearly favoured

you with all I wish to remark on this subject. I fear these remarks will not be very interesting to you, who have not heard the thing to which they relate, and it is difficult to relish a commentary without the text, but it will be satisfactory and amusing, perhaps, to me by-and-by to know what one thought of these matters at the time.'

'Pall Mall Court: June 12, 1788.

'It is curious to see how exactly people follow their own characters all through life. Mrs. Harcourt[1] is more foolish and outrageous about Hastings, and about the King and Queen, than she ever was about anything before. Here is an example of consistency of character; for the two peculiarities of hers are—first, a violent love of kings, queens, and nobles, which makes her servile in all her opinions and actions; and next, extreme violence in any idea which happens to be the prevailing one at the time. . . . She carries her Hastings violence so far that Mrs. Morrice could not go to hear Sheridan's second speech without risking a quarrel. And she abused Miss Gunning[2] very much to her face for saying that it was very fine. She said that it was very improper that such sentiments should come from the Queen's family, that the King and Queen would certainly resent it, and that Miss Gunning would never have done with it till she had made herself a

[1] Wife of General, afterwards Field-Marshal Harcourt.

[2] Miss Gunning and Mr. Digby are well known to the readers of Madame d'Arblay's amusing Diary under the names of Miss Fusileer and Mr. Fairly.

martyr. This Miss Gunning told me, and it will serve to show you what a becoming part their Majesties take in the administration of justice. I called on Miss Gunning lately for the first and only time this year, and found Mr. Digby there, as I used to do more frequently last year. When he went away I asked her if she was going to be married to him, and she said not, that there was nothing at all in it, and that the report had been disagreeable to her as tending to deprive her of his company. She is a little faded this year, and her sister Bell is much the most blooming of the two, but Miss Gunning is very clever and entertaining, and I think sensible. I dined yesterday at the Palmerstons with Sylvester Douglas, Fitzherbert, and Mrs. Johnston —General Johnston's widow. We all went to Diller's philosophical fireworks, which is a most beautiful and most ingenious exhibition, as well as a very fashionable one at present. It is an imitation of fireworks, but without any noise or any smoke, and the figures and designs are infinitely more elegant and beautiful, with the additional advantage of a great variety of the richest and finest colours. He represents the growth of plants and flowers, showing first a little stem, which grows gradually, and from which is shot out both leaves and foliage; then comes the flower budding, expanding by degrees, till you have the whole plant in its full growth, with the flowers in full bloom. The proper colours are observed, and the changes of colour take place in their proper order. He represents different insects and animals, and has a most curious chase of a

viper after its prey, and of a little flying dragon after a butterfly.[1] . . . I cannot give you any just idea of the beauty and elegance of the show. There is a vast deal of ether employed, and the room smelt so strongly of Hoffman as to add very much to my pleasure and to that of Mrs. Johnston, who has the same affection for Hoffman that I have. Everybody else was loudly complaining of the stench, while we were whiffing it up and agreeing that it was a nosegay, and that it smelt of a *good night*. I never was in Mrs. Johnston's company before, and she has made my conquest. You know she is one of the finest women in the world, but besides that she has a great deal of simplicity, of cheerfulness, of fun, with a degree of refinement and cleverness that makes her understand fun at half-a-word, which is very pleasant. She has, besides these agreeablenesses, very good qualities, and has behaved excessively well in a trying situation.'

'Pall Mall Court: June 14, 1788.

'Sheridan concluded yesterday, and the trial is adjourned to the first Tuesday in next session. . . . He was finer yesterday than ever. I believe there were few dry eyes in the assembly; and as for myself, I never remember to have cried so heartily and so copiously on any public occasion. . . . My admiration of his last day is entirely without any abatement or qualification whatever. Burke caught him in his arms as he sat down,

[1] This seems to be the trick so much admired when exhibited by the Japanese conjurors in London, and seen by Lord Elgin in Japan.

which was not the least affecting part of the day to my feelings, and could not be the least grateful testimony of his merit received by Sheridan. I have myself enjoyed that embrace on such an occasion, and know its value. There was a grand shaking of hands and leave-taking among the assistants of both sexes on this day.'

It was on this occasion that Gibbon listened with emotion, as he tells us in his Miscellaneous Works, to the personal compliment paid him 'in the presence of the British nation;' when Sheridan, having declared that the facts he had to relate were 'unparalleled in atrociousness,' added that 'nothing equal in criminality was to be traced either in ancient or modern history, in the correct periods of Tacitus or the luminous pages of Gibbon.'

It is often related that at the close of the sentence the orator turned to a friend, and whispered: 'I said *vo*luminous.' The author of the joke was not, however, Sheridan, but Dudley Long, who was sitting next to Gibbon in the gallery. When the passage occurred Gibbon was naturally pleased, and, as Dudley Long thought, for the gratification of hearing the compliment again, he asked his neighbour to tell him exactly what Sheridan had said. 'Oh,' said Dudley Long, 'he said something about your *voluminous* pages.'

Lord Russell, on whose authority we give the story, was told it by Dudley Long himself.

At the end of the session Sir Gilbert, to enjoy his

passion for sailing, went to the north by sea. Mr. Mackenzie, 'a gentleman known by the title of Deaf Mackenzie, being stone deaf, has a yacht, in which he sails to-morrow from Gravesend for his estate in the Highlands, and has agreed to give me a passage to Berwick. The yacht is an excellent vessel, he is an old sailor, the weather is fine, and the wind fair, and I hope to be home within twenty-four hours of the time by road.'

The voyage was successfully accomplished, and the conversation, carried on by signs, afforded various amusing stories, afterwards retailed to Lady Elliot, whose picture, in Sir G.'s toothpick-case, along with that of Mrs. Mackenzie, on her husband's snuff-box, was daily toasted after dinner.

CHAPTER VII.

Sir Gilbert Elliot to Lady Elliot.

'Doncaster: Tuesday, October 21, 1788.

'On Sunday we got to Newby[1] to dinner, and found them all well there. They have Lord Boringdon[2] and his tutor Mr. Worsley, and Alfred. Lord Boringdon is a very fine young man, though still kept on the footing of a boy. He is to pass this winter at Leicester with his tutor, who resides there, and then to go to Christ Church College at Oxford; he has his hair about his ears, and gets up in the morning to take his lesson with his tutor; but he is six feet high, and more formed than many of those who are in the world. I was much pleased with his manners and character, and daresay he will turn out well.

'. . . I must trust you with a good story they told us. There was a Mrs. Philippine Burton, who was no better than she should be, who had taken the liberty of going to the rooms at Brighthelmstone, which being objected to by the company, it was resolved to dismiss

[1] Mr. Robinson's country-house.

[2] John, second Baron Boringdon of Boringdon, born 1772, succeeded his father April 1787.

her, but nobody else liking the office it was undertaken by a Mr. Mackrell, a gentleman then at Brighthelmstone. He delivered his message to her accordingly, and handed her down the room without any resistance or remonstrance on her part. But when they had got to the bottom of the room she turned round, just before she went out, and said, loud enough to be heard by the bystanders, "Oh, Mr. Mackrell! how can you be so *hard-roed?*" I hope you will like it, for it was very good when I heard it.'

'Park Street: Monday, October 27, 1788.

'We[1] arrived here yesterday in the afternoon, after an expeditious journey of eleven days. Our labours seemed very ill rewarded by the dismal appearance of London, from the moment we got within its walls, and by the still more melancholy aspect of Park Street, and the two empty houses we are to inhabit. I don't know what was the matter with the streets yesterday, for though they were full of the Sunday people, they gave us both the impression of a solitude, and London, we agreed, might pass for the "deserted village." One feature of this melancholy was perhaps the shops being shut, and another was the absence of anything like a gentleman. We did not see one gentleman's carriage from Tottenham Court Road to Park Street. But the green fog, and its contrast with the green fields from whence we are come, and the difference between brick streets and pleasant Teviotdale, had probably the prin-

[1] William Elliot of Wells and Sir Gilbert Elliot.

cipal share in beglooming our arrival. Peggy was out, so we could not get our letters, and we took possession of Mr. Robinson's foreparlour. After a dish of tea, Elliot set out to his tailor near the Temple, where he 'also' called without finding any living thing; and on his return we got our letters from Peggy, which brightened us up for a time; but we were so woe-begone by this time that we could stand it no longer, and went to bed at half after *nine* out of pure dolefulness.

'Before I come to our history in London, I will just finish our travels. From Langold we went on Friday to Welbeck to dinner. On our way we stopped at Worksop Manor, the Duke of Norfolk's, and looked at the front of the great house, without however entering it. The Duke of Norfolk[1] was not at home, so I left my name for him. The poor Duchess is confined there, and if she were not mad already, the gloominess of the place would be sufficient to make her so. At Welbeck, where we dined and slept, we found the Duke and Duchess of Portland,[2] their eldest and another daughter, and Benjamin Langlois, who now resides constantly at the town of Worksop. We passed a very pleasant evening without cards, which is always an escape; but we were more indebted for our entertainment to the agreeable manners and character of the

[1] Charles, eleventh Duke of Norfolk, died, 1815, without issue.

[2] William Henry Cavendish, third Duke, born 1738. Married Dorothy, only daughter of William, fourth Duke of Devonshire. The Duke of Portland died in 1809.

Duke, than to the brightness either of her Grace or of Benjamin Langlois. Benjamin Langlois is the same diplomatic, foreign, old-fashioned coxcomb as ever, and favoured us with a good deal of *prose* of and concerning himself and his own consequence; but he is, with all this, an inoffensive and polite man. Welbeck is not a pleasing place by any means, and the house is not good. The Duke has great plans for rebuilding it, but his fortune will not permit the execution of them in his own life, and indeed I think Bulstrode will always be a more desirable residence for the family. From Welbeck we came to Buckden on Saturday.

'. . . I dined yesterday at Batt's with Mr. Legge and Mr. Garnier. . . . We went to the play to see Mrs. Jordan in Sir Harry Wildair's [1] breeches. She was extremely pretty from head to toe, nothing can be prettier than her figure as a *woman in breeches*, such as *Rosalind*, but it never answers for the handsomest female to play the part of a man. She played well and agreeably, but it is a tiresome play and part. . . .

'Parliament will certainly not meet till late in January. . . . Windham is returned. . . . Fox is at *Milan*. He should have been here on October 10 at the anniversary dinner of his election, and his friends had such strong reasons from his letters to believe that he was actually at Calais on his way, and detained by contrary winds, that they made that apology for his absence publicly. The next day they

[1] In 'The Constant Couple,' by Farquhar.

received letters from him dated *Milan*. Mrs. Armstead had sprained her ankle in Switzerland, and he could not get her to England on that account by October 10, and he therefore indulged himself in prolonging his travels. He instructed his friends, however, to give *any reason but the true one*, and this blemish in Mrs. Armstead's leg is therefore a secret of state which must not transpire through you. I had the present history from the Duke of Portland. . . .

'The King is certainly in a bad state of health, but I fancy nothing material. They make a great mystery about it, so that nobody knows much of the truth; but the best opinion seems to be that it is an unformed gout. Elliot is just returned from the city and gone to Bath. He called at Lord Heathfield's, who is confined wholly to his bed. His left side dead, but his speech and senses entire. They call it a creeping palsy, which is not to be cured; but they do not seem to apprehend immediate death.'

'October 29, 1788.

'Burke told me yesterday that the King had been in extreme danger during his late illness; that he had been seized with violent spasms in his stomach, which were so serious and so severe as to render him speechless for an hour and a half; that the immediate cause of that attack appeared to be a cold, but that in fact he was in a bad state of health before, and that the cold produced this effect because it met with a disordered constitution. The severity of this attack did not last long, but he is still ill. The spasms have

affected him downwards in his limbs and feet, which has given occasion to the report of the complaint being gout, which he told me was not the case. Burke had never heard distinctly what the complaint was for which he had gone to Cheltenham, a great deal of mystery and secrecy having been observed on the subject of this illness, which of itself shows it to have been somewhat serious, though it has concealed the particular nature of the disorder. I do not know what Mr. Burke's authority is for this account, but he considered it as authentic.'

'Beconsfield: Friday, October 31, 1788.

'This is not likely to be either so long or so edifying a letter as that which I sent you yesterday, for there is very little time left to one's own disposal in this house, and, besides the consumption of time in meals, conversation, and sauntering walks, I have business[1] with Burke which nearly fills the intervals. The party is Burke, Mrs. Burke, and the two Richards, with Miss Ann Hickey and a German professor who is here on a visit. Captain Nagle is expected to-day. The society in which Burke lives is less like himself than that of any other man. Everybody I meet seems as much increased in fat as myself, or even you. Burke has now really a most formidable belly; so has his brother Richard.' . . .

[1] Sir Gilbert's speech on the impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey was about to be printed, and he went on this occasion to Beconsfield to obtain Burke's assistance in revising it for the press.

'Pall Mall Court: November 4, 1788.

'I returned to Beconsfield on Sunday and found the same party. The German professor proved a very agreeable addition to the society of the house, being a learned, sensible, good-humoured, and unaffected man of about thirty. We learnt from him that English literature as well as English politics are infinitely more the occupation of the rest of Europe than we are apt to imagine here. There are few Germans of any degree of education who are not now well acquainted with our language, and they seem, by the specimen of this gentleman at least, better read in our authors in all branches than many of ourselves. Shakespeare is fully as much worshipped there as in England, and they have translated all his good plays, which are as much followed, and admired with as much enthusiasm as in his own national theatres.

'On Sunday evening Burke read part of the second speech with his son and me. Burke thought that I should have made the printer work it into a greater number of new paragraphs, and was very desirous also that there should be *marginal titles* to the different parts or topics to mark the more easily, in turning over the leaves, what the subjects are. Burke read it aloud, very slowly, very attentively, and did it justice in the reading.

'His praises were as usual such as a man could not by any exertion of vanity report to anybody but a wife. . . .

'Burke and the professor and I returned yesterday to

town. We called at Bulstrode on the way, and saw the Duke of Portland, who is just come to Welbeck to preside at the Revolution dinner of the Whig Club to-day. Lord Titchfield is at present with Hugh, and will probably remain with him some time. We dined at Sir Joshua Reynolds' very pleasantly; nobody but Miss Palmer,[1] whom I think you will like by and by. Sir Joshua has done a picture for Boydell's Shakespeare, fine in the execution, but unpleasing in the subject. It is the death of Cardinal Beaufort in Henry VI.; the moment of the picture is that of his expiring and the last groan and convulsion of death is the subject.

The great subject of inquiry and speculation at present is the King's health, and he is certainly very ill, though perhaps not in immediate danger of his life. The following account may, I believe, be depended on:—He went out in the dew one morning (just before his attack), and instead of changing his shoes and stockings came to town in them quite wet. After the levee he returned to Kew, where the Queen wished him to take something cordial, but Georgy boy liked his own way best, and ate a *pear* and drank a glass of cold water. He was unwell all the evening, and went to bed at his usual hour. About one in the morning he was seized violently with a cramp or some other violent thing in the stomach, which rendered him speechless, and in a word was *all but*. The Queen ran out in great alarm, in *her shift*, or with very little clothes,

[1] Sir Joshua's niece, who married Lord Inchiquin.

among the pages, who, seeing her in that situation, were at first retiring out of respect, but the Queen stopped them and sent them instantly for the apothecary at Richmond, who arrived in about forty minutes, during which time the King had continued in the fit and speechless. The apothecary tried to make him swallow something strong, but the King, who appeared not to have lost his senses, still liked a bit of his own way, and rejected by signs everything of that sort. They contrived, however, to cheat him, and got some cordial down in the shape of medicine, and the fit went off. He has been ill ever since, although he has been out and at Court.

'His feet and legs have swelled considerably, which people endeavoured to call gout; but it is not so. They tell a story of his kicking one heel against the other foot, which, though swelled, was soft, and yielded to the kick; and his saying—"They would make me believe I have the gout, but if it was the gout, how could I kick the part without any pain?" It's now pretty certain to be a dropsical swelling. I believe this account to be a true one. I do not look forward to our Whig dinner to-day with much satisfaction. A song or two from Captain Morris will probably be our only reward for a mobbing stewing meal. The business of to-day is not properly to celebrate the Revolution, but to appoint some future day for it.'

'Pall Mall Court: Saturday, November 8, 1788.

'The state of the King's health is so much the topic of inquiry and attention at present, that I shall probably not be able to speak of any other subject to-day, having passed the forenoon at the Duke of Portland's, and being obliged to write several letters for the post. I believe it is impossible that the King can be worse than he appears to be by the most undoubted accounts of yesterday and to-day. It may seem extraordinary that so little should be known of the exact nature of his disorder; but some of its effects are beyond a doubt, and are of the most serious kind. His reason is entirely gone, and I understand he has been a fortnight at least in that situation, and what seems to render this part of the case worse is that it has not been accompanied by fever. He was at the same time perfectly ungovernable, and the distress and perplexity of the Prince and the family must have been infinite. On Thursday the Prince sent the Duke of York for the Chancellor, who came with him to Windsor; the Prince probably wishing for the authority of his advice in taking steps for that degree of restraint which the disorder rendered necessary. He has intervals in which he is rather better, but he is never well, and is worse after the intervals than before. There is nothing more certain than the total alienation of his mind for the present; I believe that part of his disorder is considered as extremely desperate. But his life is as certainly in the most extreme danger; this is the language of his physicians and of all those about him who would be

most ready to conceal it if possible. Jack Payne came from Windsor this morning at about eight or nine o'clock with the latest intelligence I have heard. The account he brings is that the King is no better than yesterday, and is in the greatest danger. I have heard that the language of those with whom the Prince corresponds, and who have seen Payne to-day, is that his recovery is hopeless, but that he may linger a few days. This opinion, however, though coming from the most authentic quarter, must still be necessarily somewhat uncertain. . . .

'. . . The King is now attended by Heberden, Sir G. Baker, Warren, old Hawkins, and some of the Windsor apothecaries. The Queen does not now see him; the state of his head probably rendering the scene too painful to her. I understand the Prince is perfectly steady to his principles and friends, and that he is conducting himself with the greatest propriety and judgment. . . .

'I shall see the Duke of Portland again before the post goes, and keep my letter open till that time. Fox not yet heard of. . . . I have seen the Duke of Portland and Sheridan. Nothing new.'

'Pall Mall Court: November 11, 1788.

'It is extremely difficult, or rather impossible, to give you any distinct account of the King's health. On Saturday and Sunday the authentic accounts were such as to leave little prospect of his surviving two days. On Sunday night, by the operation of James'

powder, he was thought to be in less imminent danger of death, but his head was as bad or rather worse than ever. On Monday, the account sent by Sir G. Baker to the Duke of Portland was that the King had had some sleep that night, but that he was still extremely ill, and there was no appearance of amendment at present. On Monday night the account from authentic quarters was that he was considerably better, his pulse at 78, appetite and strength returning, but head worse than ever. To-day there is for the first time a Lord-in-waiting at St. James' to answer inquiries. I have been there, and a paper written by Dr. Warren lay on the table, dated ten o'clock this forenoon at Windsor. The words are—"His Majesty has passed a quiet night, but without any abatement in his complaints."'

In the all but daily letters which Sir Gilbert wrote to his wife, he gave her as he received them the various and often conflicting accounts current in society respecting the King's health, in which there is little to interest the reader at the present day.[1] Several letters following upon the last of the 11th November are therefore omitted.

What was then secret history is now well known, and

[1] The only topic of private interest in the letters omitted relates to Sir Gilbert's disappointment on hearing from the post-office authorities that there was no chance of a mail-coach *viâ* Carlisle, 'because the western correspondence would not afford it, and that one was never intended through Carlisle.' A curious state of things when compared with that now existing.

the speculations of the town on the greater or lesser probability of the King's immediate death, or of his prolonged life in a state of insanity, are not worth repeating.

It seems clear that the best-informed persons believed the King's insanity to be incurable, and the contradictions in the accounts current in London may be traceable to the fact that the public bulletins of the illness as delivered at St. James' always avoided the mention of the real disorder, while a private report was sent every four hours to the minister which described the King's mental condition, and was signed by the physicians. This information was of course not imparted to the public, but the leaders of Opposition had intelligence as much to be depended upon.[1]

'Pall Mall Court: November 20, 1788.

'The King' continues as ill, or rather worse than ever. I have not yet heard the day's report, but yesterday he was as ill as possible. He had not slept since Monday night, and had talked incessantly all the time. The physicians, in the report they sent to St. James', talk of fever, but I am inclined to believe he has never yet had any fever, in the common acceptation of that word, and that they avail themselves of some occasional quickness of pulse to avoid the true name of his dis-

[1] Madame d'Arblay's Diary gives a graphic account of the scenes passing at Windsor. Mention is made in one of Sir Gilbert's letters of the journey of Mr. and Mrs. Hastings to Weymouth with the Queen's favourite (and Miss Burney's enemy) Madame Schwellenberg.

order, and also to avoid the declaration of a circumstance which would make his case much more hopeless —I mean that of delirium without fever. The Houses meet to-day. . . .

'I was last night at a little council of about twenty Lords and Commoners at Lord North's, where the subject of consideration was, what the conduct of our party should be to-day; and it was determined not to oppose the adjournment, if proposed by Mr. Pitt, and to refrain, above all, from marking any haste or impatience for a determination in the present state of the Government.

'The Queen is surely, as you say, sincerely to be pitied. She has not seen the King for some weeks, but the horror of his situation cannot be entirely concealed from her; indeed, the necessity for their separation must alone explain it to her. He was, for some time, extremely impatient under this separation, and was indeed violent and outrageous in his attempts to get to her apartments. He once forced his way to her door, and finding the outer-door made fast, he was near crying, and said, "Surely they might have thought one door enough to stop me." Another time he got out of bed in his shirt, and ran into the next room, where people were waiting, and called out that he was the King, did they not know him? and that he would go to the Queen. The people, between fear and respect, ran away; but Colonel Digby laid his hand on the King's breast or shoulder, and said firmly—"Come, sir, you must not do this; go back to your bed." The King immediately submitted to this appearance of

authority. The disorder has certainly been coming on for a considerable time, and had been perceived not only by the Queen, but also by the King himself, who expressed great horror at the apprehensions of it, and wished he might die soon rather than live in that situation. But these details are not of a kind to dwell on.

'. . . The Houses have adjourned to this day fortnight. Not a word said except by Pitt. The House amazingly full.'

'Pall Mall Court: Saturday, November 22.

'The King continued yesterday exactly in the same state. . . .

'I went to Lord North's—or rather to Lady North's—on Thursday evening, where I commenced, I think, a violent friendship with Miss North,[1] and we entertained each other with witty stories, and I flatter myself to our mutual satisfaction. I also made the acquaintance of Frederick North, the invalid, who is the only pleasant son of the family, and he is very remarkably so.

'I found my old friend Lady Carmarthen[2] there too, who is really a most pleasing woman, and is most certainly a far prettier marchioness than she was a girl.

'I dined yesterday at Sir Joshua Reynolds', with the Burkes, Mr. Townley, Dance the painter, and Mr. Boswell. Boswell paid me the most extravagant compliment on my Nuncomar speech. You may suppose

[1] She married Sylvester Douglas, created Lord Glenbervie.
[2] Miss Anguish.

that I am not much flattered by this praise, especially as I have been in his company before since that speech without any mention of it, but it will serve to show that there is a strong expectation of things coming about, of which indeed there are other symptoms.'

'Pall Mall Court: Tuesday, November 25, 1788.

'The King continues just as before. Fox arrived yesterday at six in the morning; and I consider this as a very important event. The messenger whom the Duke of Portland sent in quest of him left London on the 6th of this month, but could not cross till the 8th. He came up with Fox at Bologna, 200 miles beyond Turin, in seven days from Calais. Fox had not heard from England since the month of September, and had no suspicion of the King's illness: but he actually believed the death of Lord Holland when the messenger arrived at Bologna; it had been positively affirmed by report. An English gentleman had told him that he had left Lord Holland very ill, and another had told him that when he left Geneva there was an English messenger for Mr. Fox, who did not know which road to follow him. These circumstances had convinced him of the truth of this report, which had afflicted him very much, both on account of the disadvantageous change it made in his own situation, and because he has an affection for the boy. When he was told at Boulogne that there was an express from England below, he was then thoroughly confirmed in the belief of Lord Holland's death; and when he learnt his safety, was so much

affected as to fall down on a couch and cry violently for some time. He says he had in some degree made up his mind to the change in his own situation, and thought he had almost reconciled himself to a retreat from public life; but when he heard the King's situation, and the posture of affairs in England, it gave another turn, he says, to his mind directly. He set off immediately, and the poor messenger, instead of resting at the end of such a journey, rode back again night and day, ordering Mr. Fox's horses; and they reached London together in nine days. At Lyons he heard the King was dead, but heard the truth at Paris. Mrs. Armstead is following at more leisure. It seems extraordinary that such a man as Fox could be from September to November without receiving one line from England, or knowing there was such a place in the world, and that no man in England should know with the least certainty where he was for several weeks. This, I think, could hardly happen to the most insignificant man among us; for there is nobody who has not some one or two in the world as insignificant as himself to whom he is *significant*; but Fox, in the first place, wished to be lost, and was afraid even of looking at a newspaper, for fear of finding some reason there for interrupting the pleasure and the leisure he was enjoying. He never asked for a newspaper, either foreign or English, the whole time of his absence, except once, and that was to look at the Newmarket article; and when he had seen that he did not read another word. He found there that his matches were

lost; but *another* circumstance to account for (*part torn off*). . . . Yet, I own, it does still seem a sort of phenomenon to think of Fox lost for months to England in countries where the post goes twice a week, and England as totally lost to him; and that one on whom a nation seems at present altogether to depend should not know or inquire how the world wags from September to November, or with his own goodwill, to January. He passed yesterday principally in bed, and for the effect of his arrival on business you must wait till next post. People begin now to talk as if the ministers considered the game as up; there are even reports of Pitt's talking of returning to the bar. Such reports alone afford matter enough for moralising, and present a curious picture of the mutability of human fortune, and the variety of human opinions and designs. I do not much relish, however, this triumphant sort of conversation, especially before the battle is won, or even fought; for I remember that just such triumphs preceded by a very few days our utter defeat four years ago. The Prince is, I believe, as much determined at present as possible never to have anything to do with Pitt, who was very absurdly arrogant in his good fortune, and insulted the Prince in his manner and conduct whenever he could, even in public and in his presence. This has been laid up, and not unjustly—(*piece torn off*). He will, I am persuaded, be always a great name, and a considerable person in England. . . . He will continue to couple the violent affection and compassion of the people for the King, in

his present affecting situation, with his own fortunes, and he will certainly make a very popular if not at first a very powerful opposition. To this it will be necessary to oppose popular measures on the part of the Prince's new government, which is, however, always more difficult in a government than in an opposition; for there are few measures strong enough to have any effect which do not clash with the private interests or prejudices of numbers, or which may not be misrepresented—witness our India Bill.'

'Pall Mall Court: November 26, 1788.

'This day has not produced any change in affairs. The King continues exactly as he was, and the only event is that Charles Fox went to-day to meet the Prince, which I think a comfortable circumstance. What has passed, or what the consequence of their interview may be, I do not yet know; but as everything depends so entirely on the Prince's steadiness, Fox is certainly better company than the Chancellor,[1] who has lately had frequent access to him, and is indeed in favour with him. . . .

'It is intended, I believe, to remove the King very soon to Kew. The Prince is, I suspect, pretty sick of his long confinement at Windsor, and it is very natural he should be so, for, besides the scene before him, he has been under greater restraint in his behaviour and way of life than he has ever known since he was his

[1] Thurlow.

own master. His residence, however, at Windsor has been useful in several ways; for, besides placing things under his eye and preventing the attempts at imposition and concealment with respect to the King's situation which would probably have been practised if the courtiers had been left to themselves, it has given a favourable impression of the Prince's attention to his father, and has also prevented him from breaking out into any unseasonable indulgence of his spirits before the public, which might have happened if he had resided in London. The Duke of York has been constantly with him, and they have both conducted themselves in a most exemplary way. They have both, I believe, been indulged with a visit to their respective *Princesses* now and then; the Prince at Bagshot, and the Duke to I don't know where—and no offence in that, I hope. I dined yesterday at the Duke of Portland's with a most select party. The company was the Duke and Duchess of Portland, the Duke of Devonshire, Charles Fox, Fitzpatrick, Sheridan, Lord Loughborough, and General Burgoyne. Fox was heated by his journey, during which he had a severe flux, which has reduced him very considerably in flesh. He is quite well in other respects, and in good pleasant spirits.

'In consequence of Fox's interview,[1] the Prince desired that the members of the cabinet of 1783 (when we were last in) should assemble for the purpose of giving him advice. Lord Loughborough was added to

[1] With the Prince.

these. He sent also a most satisfactory message to the Duke of Portland, and one which does him much honour. Perhaps you do not know that there had been a strong difference between the Prince and the Duke[1] about the payment of his debts, and the explanation ran so high between them that at that time there was a fair rupture. Many people thought this circumstance might still operate on the Prince's mind and occasion a most serious and indeed incurable difficulty. The contrary, however, has happened, and though the Prince still considers the Duke's opposition to that measure, or rather the advice he gave the Prince against taking it at that time, was personally unkind to him, he has retained no general rancour on the subject and sacrifices that private feeling to the general good, and indeed, I hope, to the general respect in which he holds the Duke's character. On parting with Fox the other day, he took him by the hand, and said, "Pray shake the Duke of Portland by the hand for me, and tell him that I hope everything that is past may be forgot between us; and, as a proof that I retain no impression from it, assure him that as soon as I come to town, which will be in a day or two, I shall come to Burlington House, and I do not desire that my going there should be kept private." This looks more like heart, and is done more like a gentleman than one looks for from any other Prince we have known in England. The Duke was properly touched with this

[1] See *ante*, p. 161.

conduct, and sat down to answer the message. He wrote five letters, four of which he burnt, and at length sent for me to revise the fifth, and help him out if necessary. He sent for Windham at the same time "as another great critic"—these are the Duke's words, not mine. I found the general purport and matter of his letter excellent, but thinking some part of it a little objectionable and a little obscure, I wrote another on the same plan, and not departing from the material conception of the Duke's, which, being approved by Windham and the Duke, was sent just as I wrote it. So I have the honour to be the author of the first state-paper of this reign or regency. I send these little particulars to you because I know they will be interesting to you, and safe with you.'

'Pall Mall Court: Friday, December 5, 1788.

'I had no time yesterday to give you any account of the examination of the physicians at the Privy Council, and of what passed in the House of Commons. . . . The ministerial members of the Privy Council seem to have formed their plan for suppressing as much of the truth as possible, and indeed for disguising it, as well as for preventing its reaching the public. For this purpose they set down on paper three or four queries which were to be answered by the physicians, and they endeavoured to settle an agreement or resolution of the Council that no other questions should be asked, and no further or closer examination should be permitted. The pretence for this was to avoid what

was called the indelicacy of inquiring into the particular acts committed by the King. The three questions were in substance—Whether the King was capable of attending to public business? What probability there was of his recovery? And at what time it might be expected? The majority of our friends in the Council gave in to this idea of delicacy, and acquiesced pretty much in restraining the inquiry within these bounds. Burke opposed this restriction, and endeavoured to break through it by his questions, but was not supported by our friends, and was overruled by the Council. Nothing can be more absurd than this false delicacy, which amounts in fact to this:—That they are indelicate enough to set the King aside, but they are too delicate to tell or to inquire why. If there was ever a measure which required *certainty* as to the fact, and therefore a minute and jealous inquiry into it; or if ever there was an occasion when the grounds of our proceeding should be made notorious and unquestionable to every man in the kingdom; it is this. . . .[1] Burke made a very rough crude sketch of an address to the Prince of Wales from the House of Commons inviting him to assume the Regency, that we might be ready with it when the proper time comes. He showed it me, and desired me to revise it; but I found the best way was to draw a new one on my own

[1] The parts omitted relate to the difficulty of ascertaining from the medical opinions whether the King's case was one of a kind to make recovery probable or not. The physicians all agreed in his present incapacity to attend to business, but generally thought recovery possible, though on this point some hesitated.

plan, adapting a few of his phrases where I could. This I did the day before yesterday. It was much approved of by Burke, the Duke of Portland, and Fox. Fox desired me yesterday to call on him in the afternoon, and sit an hour with him, as much company distracted him, but a little quiet company did him a great deal of good. I went accordingly, and found only Lord Robert Spencer, and I read my address to them two. We afterwards conversed about the present business, and occasionally about his journey, etc., very pleasantly; and this visit, which was sought by him, has put me on an easier and more cordial footing with him than I have hitherto been. Lord Robert soon went away, and as Fox ordered nobody to be let in except Sheridan and such, we had a pretty long *tête-à-tête.* Fitzpatrick and Lord Fitzwilliam came afterwards, and I went to Brookes' about ten. Fox was very weak and low; his disorder has much reduced his strength and sunk his spirits. . . . He is, however, better to-day, but I suspect it is only the temporary relief of laudanum. . . . At Brookes' I found the Prince of Wales—that's to say he was in the house, but I did not see him, for he had just retired to a private room with Grey, who, I forgot to tell you, is a great favourite, and is admitted to all their most private or cabinet councils. We are rather afraid of his premature ambition running foul of the established heads of the party one day and doing mischief. This between ourselves.

'I went from Brookes' with Lord Palmerston to Mrs.

Legge's, where was Miss North, with whom and Mrs. Legge I am invited to dine at *Douglas' chambers*. I should not be quite surprised if he had *thoughts*. I know he wishes to marry.'

'Saturday, December 13, 1788.

. . . 'Lord Malmesbury has to-day declared in our favour, but seems afraid of being abused by the other side.

'He went from me to the Duke of Portland, whom he had not yet seen, and to Fox also for the first time. Fox will probably take him to the Prince. You will see in the papers what was done in the House yesterday. Pitt has professed his intention to propose the Prince as sole Regent, but has also declared his intention to propose limitation of his power.[1] Lord Malmesbury found a large party with me—Burke, Windham, Pelham, and Elliot, and I believe he thought it a new cabinet council.'

'December 16, 1788.

'Whether the Prince has any claims to it or not, we are all agreed that he is to be appointed Regent; and he not only does not urge his claim, but expressly

[1] The question about to be hotly debated was this: Should the Prince of Wales be appointed to the office of Regent by a vote of the Houses of Parliament, with such limitations on his power as they might see fit to devise; or, Should he assume the Regency in virtue of his birthright, as he undoubtedly would the crown in case of the demise of the Sovereign.

The Government adopted the first course—the Opposition urged the second. In weighing the value of the conflicting arguments one must not forget that the Ministry expected to go out with the King, and the Opposition to come in with the Regent.

waives it. Pitt is, however, to bring that question on to-day, supposing it to be a popular point, and that Opposition, by being obliged to vote for the Prince's rights to the Regency, will be hurt in the public opinion. We are to move the previous question—that is to say, to object to the question's being put at all; and our division and debate to-day will be not on the *Prince's right*, but whether that right should be discussed or declared by Parliament or not. This is a favourable question for us to divide on, for it should draw to us all moderate and neutral men who wish to avoid strong propositions or like public tranquillity. And, accordingly some of our friends express strong hopes of beating Pitt on the question of this day. I confess, however, I am by no means sanguine of the event, and that I consider the majority as perfectly doubtful. I still think the business *must* end well; but we are in a battle, and all battles are precarious. The King continues precisely in the same state. Willis has done all sorts of real mountebank things, which have frequently done harm. The last experiment he made was letting the King see one of the Princesses and the Queen. The King has always been violent to see the Queen and the Princesses. On Saturday Willis had Princess Emily, of nine years old, brought to him. As soon as she was within his reach, he caught her up in his arms, and swore that no power on earth should ever separate them again. The girl was terrified, and so were the bystanders; and they could not get the child away till they had promised to bring the Queen. She was brought

accordingly, and the King behaved exactly in the same way—catching fast hold of her in his arms, and swearing that nothing should ever part them again. The Queen fell into fits, and they were obliged to separate them by main force; and the King was for the first time put in a strait-waistcoat, and continued raving a considerable time afterwards. Yesterday morning the King said to Warren—"I suppose that you have heard that I have had a strait-waistcoat on?" Warren said "he had heard it." "Yes," said the King, "I had it on, but I put in on myself; and I am not sorry for it, because it settles the matter completely, and I am now sure of never appearing in the world again; for you know a man that has been in a strait-waistcoat can never wear a crown again." This Warren told yesterday at Carlton Terrace, and Payne, who heard him, told it me.'

'Pall Mall Court: Thursday, December 18, 1788.

'These are very busy times, and are of course much against correspondence. Tuesday we were in the House of Commons till three next morning. We shall have another very late sitting to-day, and business again on Monday. . . . We were shockingly beat on Tuesday—268 to 204—majority against us 64, which was much more than we expected, although I certainly did not expect we should carry our point. This majority in Parliament may tempt Pitt to do still more than he intended, and to increase yet more the restrictions he means to lay on the Regency; in which he looks for one of two advantages—either that the Prince will refuse it, and thus enable him to appoint

the Queen, or perhaps himself, and a few more of his followers, to that situation; or else, if the Prince should accept, that his government will be so weak as to disable him from carrying it on without Mr. Pitt for his minister. Things are now in a situation in which I really cannot form a decided opinion of the event. Much might depend on the people's perceiving and resenting this profligate attempt to set aside the Prince of Wales, and to weaken the Crown, in his own favour. But I see no reason to suppose the blind will be restored to light by this, as their eyes have continued shut to so many instances of a similar kind. Pitt is the only object the nation can perceive, and the only thing they think valuable in the world; and I rather think they would be content and pleased to set aside the whole Royal Family, with the Crown and both Houses of Parliament, if they could keep him by it. . . . I dined at Mrs. Gally's yesterday, and went to the play afterwards with Mrs. Culverden to Mrs. Jordan's benefit—Rosalind, and Nell in the "Devil to Pay." She was excellence itself in both parts; but Rosalind is the perfection of perfection—her figure the most beautiful thing you ever saw.'

'Pall Mall Court: Saturday, December 20, 1788.

'. . . Both Pitt and Fox are ill; but Pitt's illness is only a cold and hoarseness. Fox's is a real illness, which requires rest to recover from. He is much reduced in strength and health, but not at all in spirits nor abilities. The other side, however, with all their

tenderness and feeling for the King, are inquiring after Fox's illness with a most blood-thirsty eagerness. . . . I dined yesterday at Mrs. Gally's, and found Mrs. Morrice there. We were mutually glad to meet, but I found her more bit by Mrs. Harcourt's folly, and indeed madness, on this occasion of the King's illness, etc., than I thought possible with her sort of sense and character. She is really outrageous. It will require all my moderation and temper to prevent mischief between us; but as I should really regret very much any absurd rupture of coldness with so agreeable a friend, I think I shall succeed in preventing it. Mrs. Harcourt has all this time been amusing herself by going into fits, and by passing days in tears about the King. I allow all the natural compassion for the distress of the Royal Family, which it can be supposed to produce in those who may be attached to them. But it is pushed to a rage and fury completely nonsensical against poor us, whose offence in the matter I cannot comprehend.'

'Pall Mall Court: December 27, 1788.

'. . . Charles Fox is much better. He went yesterday to Beconsfield with Windham, to remain with Burke quietly a day or two. The day before yesterday there was a final explanation with the Chancellor, which terminated in a decided separation between him and our party, to the great joy of Fox, and of every one of us except the Prince himself. The Chancellor has been the whole of this time playing a shabby trimming game, keeping himself open to both parties

till one should be completely victorious. The Prince, who has always had a partiality for the Chancellor, probably on account of his *table* qualities, has been negotiating, and intriguing, and canvassing him incessantly, with very little discretion or prudence all the time; and in spite of many disappointments and breaches of engagements, which the Chancellor had made about the part he should take in the House of Lords, he still persisted in sending for him and holding long conversations with him on the business. The Chancellor, by this means, learned the interior of the Prince's affairs and intentions, and was betraying him all the time to Pitt. Fox at last, who has uniformly been against any connection with the Chancellor, of whom he thinks worse than of any man in the world, had an explicit conference with him, in which he drove the Chancellor to a final and full declaration of his intention; and he is now quite off. The reason of our satisfaction on this event, notwithstanding the strength of the Chancellor's interest in the House of Lords, is, that he is considered as a treacherous and dangerous character to form any connection with, and to admit into a cabinet. . . . .'

'Pall Mall Court: Monday, December 29, 1788.

'I have been employed most unprofitably the greatest part of this day. It was thought proper to have a protest in the House of Lords,[1] to be signed by

[1] On the resolutions respecting the King's illness sent up from the Commons.

the Lords of our party, on the subject of this day's debate. Dr. Lawrence was first employed to prepare it, and he did so two or three days ago, and he did so at some length, and with a good deal of merit, although his work was objectionable on some points. I was desired by the Duke of Portland to meet him at Burlington House to criticise, and Pelham was there by accident. This was the day before yesterday. Pelham did not like it; and then sent to Burke, at Beconsfield, to prepare another. He did so, and produced a still larger one, with many fine things in it, but requiring some arrangement and correction. This was also disapproved of; and out of this work of Burke's Lord Malmesbury had persuaded the Duke to get a short little extract made, of only a few sentences. This was undertaken to-day by Lord Loughborough, and I was again sent for to criticise. I found Lord Malmesbury at Burlington House approving of this little paper of Lord Loughborough's, and preaching shortness and coldness, and such-like bad advice. I presumed to disapprove of the performance very much, and succeeded in persuading the Duke that an appeal to the people, which this was meant for, on a great constitutional question, and in such a crisis as this, without a spark of animation, dignity, or soul, could only do us harm, by extinguishing any spirit the subject itself might have a chance of raising. I was then desired to take it home and prepare it as I could, to be sent down to the House the moment it was ready. I brought home Lawrence and Pelham with me, and

by working very closely and briskly we inspirited this corpse of Lord Loughborough's and Lord Malmesbury's with a little life and vigour, without lengthening it materially, and I carried it down to the House of Lords at half after six, when, to our great mortification, we found the House had been up half-an-hour, and the protesting Lords had signed Lord Loughborough's vile bald stuff, and entered it on the journals. So this day's work is all but loss. The Duke of Portland, after reading our edition, regretted very much indeed they had lost it. You see how many wise heads are busied in the production of some of these trifles; but you would be more surprised to see how very little judgment or genius is sometimes found in very great men. . . .

'I dined yesterday at Francis' to meet Mr. Grattan, the famous Irish orator, to whom you know the parliament of Ireland voted 50,000*l.* for his services to his country by his oratory. (*Part of this letter is missing.*)

'She[1] is playing the devil, and has been all this time at the bottom of the cabals and intrigues against the Prince. It is believed that she was ready to accept the Regency if the Prince had been advised to refuse it. One principal engine of the intriguers, is the opinion which they contrive to maintain in the public that the King's recovery is to be expected with certainty, and very speedily. Dr. Willis was brought about the King for that purpose, the other physicians

[1] Evidently the Queen.

not being sufficiently subservient, and he being a noted shot with the long bow, besides being a quack. . . . He has almost the entire management of the King. The other physicians see him in their turns half-an-hour in a day, and take Willis's report for the rest. . . . We are sure of a favourable report the day before any debate in the Houses; and Willis has been detected writing letters to Pitt, who has read them at White's to the M.P.'s and other people, giving assurances of the King's great amendment and of his immediate recovery, and this on the days when he had been in a strait-waistcoat, and at the very worst. Warren and the other physicians have remonstrated against this, and it has made some noise.'

'Pall Mall Court: January 1, 1789.

'The Speaker[1] is dangerously ill of a pleurisy, and it is thought he will die. The House cannot meet on that account. On Monday, I suppose, if he is not recovered, which seems impossible, they will choose a temporary or pro-Speaker. . . .

'The restrictions were at last sent to the Prince by Pitt yesterday. They consist in the following articles:

'"No power to make Peers.

'"No power to grant places for life.

'"No share in managing the King's real or personal estate.

'"The Household to be at the Queen's disposal."

[1] Mr. Cornewall.

'No time fixed for the duration of these restrictions; but if "they should be disappointed in their *sanguine* hopes of the King's *speedy* recovery, then these limitations may become the subject of future discussions." You see by this news the Queen is set at the head of a strong separate party or faction against the government of the country. . . .

'I went to the play last night to see Mrs. Jordan in Nell. Lord Malmesbury had the next box for himself, Mr. Robinson, Batt, and some more men.'

'Pall Mall Court: Saturday, January 3, 1789.

'Lord Malmesbury has been one of my visitors today. The Duke of Portland wants him very eagerly to return to the Hague, and seems rather hurt at his positive refusal to do it. Fox was also very desirous of the same thing. This I had from the Duke, who told me, at the same time, that he had always thought so highly of his services in Holland, and of their extreme importance to Great Britain, that he thought they required a reward from Parliament in the most signal and marked way that could be devised. Fox has desired Lord Malmesbury to take the embassy to Paris, which he makes difficulties about. This would be very agreeable to Harriet. . . . But it is time now to speak of myself. The Speaker died yesterday morning, after a short inflammatory illness. Pitt will now have the choice of a Speaker, and William Grenville will *certainly be the man*. The election is to be on Monday; but how will you be struck with

horror when you hear, that if we had had the choice, my friends would certainly have proposed me! . . .

'The Duke of Portland approved of the thing very strongly, and took it to Fox, who was also much pleased with it; and, last of all, the Prince of Wales was as warm and eager on the subject as possible, telling everybody who came in that I was the best man in the House of Commons for the office, and so forth; and I am told, in high spirits and with great eagerness on the occasion. . . . It is not yet determined by my friends whether they will propose me on Monday or not, in opposition to Grenville. They know with certainty we shall be beat; but there is a doubt whether it is not still advantageous to make a stand on this question.'

How this piece of intelligence was received by Lady Elliot, may be seen in the following extract from the letter she wrote to Sir Gilbert in reply.

'Minto.

'I don't think I was ever more entertained in my life, or laughed more heartily than I have done to-day with the thoughts of the situation you think probable to fall to your share. It appears to me so completely ridiculous, that I hardly know how to speak seriously on the subject, and cannot help feeling some degree of doubt whether you do not mean to humbug me, and see whether I am as great a Sawney as ever, and as bad a hand at taking a joke; if you are serious, however, you may perhaps only think me very silly to be so

little sensible of other advantages as to give them up from mere outward appearances; but I confess I cannot compose my muscles when I think of you riding in the state-coach with your flowing wig. However, I must be serious, though on a ludicrous subject, and in honest plain truth, of all places in the world I think it the most unfit for you. Money is a great temptation to do many unpleasant things, but as I consider health and comfort the two essential points to happiness, money has no weight in competition with them, and there would certainly be a total end of the last if not of the first. I am sure your constitution is by no means equal to the confinement, sedentary life, and constant bore, of being Speaker to the House of Commons, &c.; and last, though not least, I do absolutely bar a wig! Consider how tired you would be of sitting to hear all the prosing in the House of Commons, and how much more so with all the great dinners and levees. What is the use of superior talents if you are to sit still and say nothing? better have nothing than be enveloped in a great wig and state-coach; it would be making an old square-toes of you at once. Be anything *but* Speaker, and write me delightful long letters, as you have done to-day, let the subject be as it may.'

Sir Gilbert Elliot to Lady Elliot.

'Pall Mall Court: Tuesday, January 6, 1789.

'I was actually proposed yesterday as Speaker against Grenville, who had a majority of 71—215-144.

This division, although not so good as it ought to have been, answered all the purposes proposed; but really I never knew a business so ill conducted as this was by our friends. Two whole days were suffered to elapse, or rather three days, before any determination was taken on the subject, although it was just as easy to decide in an hour as in a year. It was not decided by Fox till Sunday about four o'clock that we should propose a Speaker, and he then rather suffered Burke and Pelham to decide it than came to any resolution himself. This I fear is a habitual defect in Fox, who has as great difficulty or backwardness in *resolving* as if he had no interest or no judgment in the affairs that are depending, and at last he lets anybody else decide for him; so measures are often the production of chance instead of wisdom. This one, however, was certainly wise, as his advisers do not want for wisdom. At four o'clock on Sunday we were first authorised to take any steps in the business. Adam,[1] who acts already as secretary to the Duke of Portland, or to the Treasury, was to dine at the Duke of York's, but appointed me at nine o'clock at Burlington House, with half-a-dozen other friends, to concert and execute the proper measures. We all assembled at nine and arranged a canvass of 60 or 70 of the enemy, whom it was supposed barely possible to get over. It was two o'clock in the morning before we separated, and of course there was not a word spoke, a visit made, or a note sent, till

[1] Mr. Adam of Blairadam, afterwards Lord Chief-Commissioner of the Jury Court.

yesterday morning, and the business was to come on the same day. By this means I certainly lost many votes—I should think at least a dozen—and 20 or 30 of my votes came too late and were shut out of the division. Lord Palmerston had taken James' powders, which he would not have done had he expected this question; in short, with proper management I believe I might have reduced the majority to 50, which would have been considerably better for the party as well as more agreeable to me. One vote for me has quite won my heart. It is Lord Herbert's. Recollect that Lady Pembroke is in the Queen's family, and that they are all more raving mad than the King. Lord Herbert is himself in the Household, a place given him by Pitt. He was, I believe, the only one of the enemy who did the thing like a gentleman and a true friend, and came over, showing himself as conspicuously as he could and taking pains to be observed as my friend. When I heard of it and took him by the hand after the division, I felt *the bone* in my throat.[1]

'Now as to the purpose of this measure, it was to reserve our right to turn Grenville out and appoint another Speaker next Parliament, which would have been more difficult if we had assented unanimously to his present election.'

[1] To this Lady Elliot replied:—

'Minto: January 11, 1789.

'I am convinced his (Lord Herbert's) conduct must have given you great pleasure, but I have no idea of any attachment to a political party interfering with private regard. I have none of that Roman spirit in me, nor do I believe it exists, though it is a good name for selfishness, and following self-interest.

'Pall Mall Court: January 8, 1789.

'I believe it was on Saturday that Warren, when he went to Kew, was desired by Willis to sign a report which was ready written, saying that the King was better. He refused, saying that it was not his opinion—that the King seemed indeed better in his general health—but that there was no change whatever in his real disorder, and he expressed his surprise at their preparing a report for him before he was consulted about it. Willis told him that the Queen had seen it and approved of it, and that it was her order that it should be signed. Warren still persisted in his refusal to sign what he thought false, and Willis still urged the Queen's authority with threats, as from her, that it would be worse for him if he did not comply. Warren desired an audience of the Queen, whom he found white with rage, and she asked him in an angry tone what he meant by refusing to sign the report. He repeated that it was contrary to his opinion, acknowledging that the King's *health* was apparently better, but that as to his reason, which was his only complaint, there was no amendment at all. She said that this was very different from the account given by other persons, and desired to know his reasons for thinking so. Warren answered that, among other reasons, the King's conversation was proof enough that there was no amendment. She desired to know what his conversation had been that day. He answered that, besides incoherency, it was in other respects such as left no doubt of his continuing exactly

in the same state. She desired to know what the conversation was. Warren declined informing her, because it was of a nature which rendered it impossible for him to relate to her Majesty. The Queen then said she supposed he meant it was *indecent*. She insisted nevertheless on hearing it, and Warren persisted in refusing to tell her on the ground of the impossibility of relating such discourse to her, and he was at last allowed to depart. He was followed out, however, by two old ladies—Lady Charlotte Finch and Lady Harcourt—who told him they were sent by the Queen to learn this conversation and report it to her. Warren told them Hawkins, the King's surgeon, had heard still more of it, and they had better inquire of him. Hawkins was accordingly sent for, and being asked the same questions made the same coy resistance, assuring them that he could not bring his mouth to pronounce such things in the presence of ladies.' (*The end of this letter is missing.*)

'January 10, 1789.

'We are rather in distress for a proper man for that office (Chancellorship of the Exchequer). Lord John Cavendish is very unwilling to engage again in public affairs. Fox is to be Secretary of State. Burke, it is thought, would not be approved of. Sheridan has not the public confidence, and so it comes down therefore to Grey, Pelham, myself, and perhaps Windham. Pelham was, I believe, the man thought of most seriously, but he thought himself too inexperienced to undertake it. The Duke of Portland has thought it absolutely

necessary that Pelham should go to Ireland at this critical season, confiding in his judgment and temper as well as in his acquaintance with the country; and Pelham, though very averse to the employment, and very unwilling to interrupt his English society and views, thinks it incumbent on him to obey.[1] Sheridan is to be the Treasurer of the Navy, but I believe looks at some future time to the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, or some Cabinet office, when he supposes the public may have been long enough accustomed to consider him as a person high in office, and therefore entitled to take the place in the State which his abilities would justify without the envy belonging to the sudden elevation of an upstart.

'Although I can tell you nothing positive about my own situation, I was made very happy indeed yesterday by co-operating in the settlement of Burke's in a manner which gives me great joy as well as comfort. The Duke of Portland has felt distressed how to arrange Burke and his family in a manner equal to Burke's merits and to the Duke's own wishes, and at

[1] In a former letter Sir Gilbert wrote—'I have lived of late more with Tom Pelham than anybody, and think more highly of his character, and indeed of the soundness of his understanding, than of any one I know, with very few exceptions indeed.' To this Lady Elliot replied—'Minto: January 19, 1789.—I am afraid that I shall not get a peep at Mr. Pelham before he sets out for Ireland, but I feel very proud to have shown my discernment in admiring his character, even knowing him as little as I do, and before those of better judgment had led my opinion; but what pleased me in his manner was modesty, mildness, and an appearance of goodness, and I shall certainly now like him better than ever from the partiality you have for him, and his friendship with you.'

the same time so as to be exempt from the many difficulties which seem to be in the way. He sent for Pelham and me, as Burke's friends and his own, to advise with us about it; and we dined yesterday with him and the Duchess that we might have time to talk the thing over at leisure and without interruption after dinner. We stayed accordingly, engaged in that subject till almost twelve at night, and our conference ended most happily, and excessively to the satisfaction of us all. The Duke of Portland has the veneration for Burke that Windham, Pelham, myself, and a few more have, and he thinks it impossible to do too much for him. He considers the reward to be given to Burke as a credit and honour to the nation, and he considers the neglect of him and his embarrassed situation as having been long a reproach to the country. The unjust prejudice and clamour which has prevailed against him and his family only determine the Duke the more to do him justice. The question was how? First, his brother Richard, who was Secretary to the Treasury before, will have the same office now, but the Duke intends to give him one of the first offices which falls vacant of about 1,000*l.* a year for life in the Customs, and he will then resign the Secretary to the Treasury, which, however, in the meanwhile, is worth 3,000*l.* a year. Edmund Burke is to have the Pay Office, 4,000*l.* a year; but as that is precarious, and he can leave no provision for his son, it would, in fact, be doing little or nothing of any real or substantial value unless some *permanent* provision is added to it. In this view the Duke is to

grant him on the Irish Establishment a pension of 2000*l.* a year *clear* for his own life, with the reversion of half of it to his son for life, and the other half to Mrs. Burke for her life. This will make Burke completely happy by leaving his wife and son safe from want after his death if they should survive him. The Duke's affectionate anxiety to accomplish this object, and his determination to set all clamour at defiance on this point of justice, was truly affecting, and increases my attachment for the Duke, which has grown indeed exactly in proportion as I have seen and lived with him. Pelham has the same merit. He really felt on the subject as if it had concerned himself, or rather his own father or brother, for I never saw anybody less thoughtful of himself than Pelham, or more anxious for his friends. . . . The Duke said the only objection to this plan was that he thought it was due from this country, and that he grudged the honour of it to Ireland; but as nothing in England was ready this plan was settled. You may think it strange that to this moment Burke does not know a word of all this, and his family are indeed, I believe, suffering a little under the apprehension that he may be neglected in the general scramble.

'I believe there never were three cabinet councillors more in harmony on any subject than we were, nor three people ever happier with their day's work. Pelham and I went to Brookes', and from mere satisfaction at what we had been about found ourselves in good

enough spirits to stay supper, and to sit up till three this morning.

'. . . I dined on Saturday at the Duke of York's, and was much pleased with him. La Coste[1] was in waiting as a page, or, in other words, as servant out of livery. The Duke of York is extremely handsome. I had not observed this so much before this year, but it is certainly so. He is very gentlemanlike, with a steadier manner than the Prince of Wales. He has lately broken with Lady Tyrconnel, and the best of the joke is, that not only she has been in fits on the occasion, but that both her *father* and her *husband* resent the rupture as an affront and an indignity put on *them* and on the *family*. They vote accordingly all against us.

'Thank Gilbert and Amy for their joint letter; he is really become a great writer, and may, *perhaps*, be a clever fellow some day.'

'Pall Mall Court: Saturday, January 17, 1789.

'. . . The House, at length, proceeded yesterday. Pitt opened his limitations, and they were all voted except that which relates to the Household, and is reserved for Monday. The first question on which we divided was, whether there should be *any* restrictions or *none*. The majority on that division was 73. The next question on which there was a division was a motion by Fox for limiting the duration of the restrictions to some limited time. On this the majority against us was 57, so that we gained 16 on that

[1] Formerly valet to Hugh Elliot.

question. Banks and Hawkins Brown were among those who came to us on that question. It is probable that our division will be better on the question of the Household, which remains, than on any other, and it is even not improbable that Pitt will be obliged to give up part of that scheme. The proposal, as opened yesterday, is to place the custody of the King in the hands of the Queen, and to give her the sole power of appointing and removing the Household. By Household he explained himself to mean every office, from the highest to the lowest, in the department known by that name—Master of the Horse, Chamberlain, Steward of the Household, so downward to the pages, beefeaters, and grooms. He made this proposition as if he was ashamed of it himself; for the only principle on which he could find a pretence for leaving any appointment whatever in the hands of any other person than he who is to have charge of the government was, that it was proper to retain those who were immediately about the King's person under the control of those who had the custody of the King's person; and in order to get the great officers of the Household within his clutches also, he had recourse to this argument—that the Master of the Horse having the control over the equerries, and the Chamberlain over the pages who attend the King's person, it was necessary to put themselves under the control of the Queen; as if it were not easy enough to vote that the equerries and pages should *not* be under the control of the Master of the Horse, etc., during the period of these restrictions. Pitt could hardly find face

to state this, and left himself the power of retracting if he found it would not go down, saying, that if these great officers, or any others within the general term Household, could be distinguished from the rest, so that the restrictions should appear less necessary as to them, he was willing to except them. . . . I forgot to mention that part of Pitt's scheme is, that the Queen shall have a council to advise her in the management of her trust, and that the council shall have access to the King, and power to examine the King's physicians and attendants. I take it for granted that he, or his followers, will be of that council, so here are *two* administrations in the country, and it is hard to say which will be the most powerful; for, besides the great patronage taken from the regular government, and enjoyed by the other, that other will have the King in their hands, without the power of inspection from any other quarter, to play tricks with, and distract the country every week.'

'Pall Mall Court: Tuesday, January 20, 1789.

'. . . All the restrictions were voted yesterday in the House of Commons, and are gone to-day to the Lords. The whole Household, from top to bottom, is taken from the Regent and given to the Queen, to be managed by the advice of a *council*, to be named in the bill, and not removable by her. This council to be composed of the great officers of the Household, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Lord Thurlow; so that this immense job is not trusted even to the Queen, lest

she should not be steady to their purposes, but is put directly into the hands of the faction itself. There was reason to expect a better division on the question of the Household, which everybody out of doors condemns, and many of Pitt's usual supporters had expressed objections to in the House; but the majority is still sixty-four, which is so near the usual majority as to leave no hope at all in the impartiality of this House of Commons while Pitt continues even nominal minister. . . . I dined on Sunday at Mrs. Legge's in Grosvenor Square, with Windham, Pelham, Douglas, Cholmondeley, and Elliot. Legge is a violent Tory, or, if you please, in his heart strongly against all our party.[1] This is occasioned by his connection with Lord Bagot and his family, who have, I know not why, a perfect dominion over him. He is so quiet a little man, that I never suspected this till lately; but as Mrs. Legge and all her friends are of another sort, I fear Mr. Legge suffers much internal mortification, for he never sees at his own house any company of his own way of thinking; and as *we* are pretty strong, and sufficiently violent in our conversation, he must undergo it all in solitary silence and dudgeon. He happened, however, last Sunday to be moved sufficiently by our conversation to put in his word, and drew down upon himself such a volley from us all as was enough to oppress a stouter man. I thought Cholmondeley and

[1] Heneage Legge, born 1747, grandson of second Lord Dartmouth; his sister, Catherine Legge, married Charles Chester, Esq., brother of the first Lord Bagot.

he would have come to a plain quarrel, for Cholmondeley's debates are apt to get into loss of temper, and Legge hates him, and complains in confidence of his living as much in his house as himself. I went, after Mrs. Legge's, to Lord North's, where was a large but very pleasant roomful. Among the rest came Harriet, Lady Beauchamp,[1] and George Ellis. He, as well as the rest of the party, is full of love and admiration for Lady Beauchamp, and I therefore presume she is really to be liked; all I know of it, however, is that she is handsome.'

'Pall Mall Court: Thursday, January 29, 1789.

'. . . An address, or rather message, is to be carried to-day to the Prince of Wales by a Committee of both Houses, to communicate the resolutions, and to ask him if he will accept of the Regency on those terms, as soon as an act of Parliament has passed for carrying them into effect. He will give his answer accepting immediately; and we shall then proceed in the House of Commons to order a commission to open the session of Parliament in the King's name. A message also goes to the Queen to desire her acceptance of the share given to her in this business, and I do not think we need despair of her consent.'

'Saturday, January 31.

'There was not a word of the Prince's letter to Pitt (mine). It was originally Burke's, altered a little, but not improved, by Sheridan and other critics. The

[1] Afterwards Marchioness of Hertford.

answer made by the Prince yesterday to the address of the two Houses was entirely mine, and done in a great hurry half-an-hour before it was to be delivered.'

'Tuesday, February 3.

. . There will be a sham opening of Parliament to-day,[1] and the Regency Bill will be brought into the House of Commons to-day. It is expected to pass through the House this week, and through the House of Lords next week, so that the Prince will probably be in possession by Saturday se'nnight. . . . Burke has come more forward in the debates since Fox's departure to Bath, and made a speech yesterday thought one of the best ever heard by anybody on *all* sides; so that we should not be without a great leader even if we were to lose Fox. I am happy, however, to tell you that there has never been any danger of our losing Fox—he is considerably better since he went to Bath.'

'Pall Mall Court: Saturday, February 7, 1789.

'. . . The Regency Bill, which was printed yesterday, surpasses all that we conceived possible even from Pitt. Nobody but the Queen will have the power of *seeing* the King at all, except those whom she puts about him; and she will dismiss all the physicians except *Dr. Willis*, and perhaps one other, to attend now and then, whom she thinks she can depend on. Even her own council are not to have a right to see

[1] Under the authority of a commission to which Burke gave the name of the 'Phantom.' *See* Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors* (Lord Thurlow).

the King, but are to take the accounts from the examination of the physicians—that is to say, from Dr. Willis. . . . When the Queen chooses to declare that the King has recovered, and after a few ceremonies in the Privy Council, the King may summon a certain number of Privy Councillors, to be selected and named by himself—that is, by the Queen and Dr. Willis . . . and he may then, with the advice of these Privy Councillors (chosen for the purpose by himself), declare his intention to resume the government; after which a proclamation is to be immediately issued, and the Regency is to be at an end at once, and the King is to be in complete possession of authority, as if nothing had happened. You see the scheme of this is to exclude Parliament, or any other public body, from recognising the King's recovery, and it is calculated to enable the Queen and Mr. Pitt to reinstate the King whether he is well or not. They will then get him to nominate a Regency, and probably to appoint the Queen Regent.'

'February 10, 1789.

'There was a great riot at the Opera last night occasioned by the badness of the dancers this year. You will probably see some account of it in the papers of to-morrow; but I hear *Batt* was one of the most violent and active in destroying the scenes, harpsichord, etc. This is a true *Battism*, who professes gentleness and candour, but is in fact only a servile follower of what he thinks fashion.

'Pall Mall Court: February 12, 1789.

'The King has been really considerably better the last two days. Sir G. Baker saw him the day before yesterday, and says that he conversed rationally and coherently, with a great deal of recollection, for twenty-five minutes. He mentioned many circumstances of his illness, of which he knew the history very exactly from October 22. Baker says that he does not consider this amendment as actual convalescence (or as proving anything with regard to a final cure of the disorder), but it is certainly an amendment, and as he could not recover without passing through this state, it is a circumstance of encouragement and hope that he has reached that state. Warren also saw him yesterday, and found him considerably better, but does not seem to think the hope of perfect recovery even now a probable one. You can hardly conceive the effect this had in the town. The appointment of the Regency goes on just the same. . . . There certainly never was a greater combination of embarrassing circumstances for a government or a country than the present. A mad King was bad enough in itself. The sort of government they have chosen to substitute in its place made bad worse, but the addition of a doubt whether the King is mad or not can alone make the worse the worst of all. However, all good and all bad is the affair of a few risings and settings of the sun, or a few waxings and wanings of the moon, in this waxing and waning, rising and setting world, where all things last for a time; and I presume we shall, somehow or

other, some time or other, get settled at least, if not right, again.'

'Pall Mall Court: February 16, 1789.

'The King still better. The account to-day is that he is in a state of *convalescence*. Whether this is a recovery, or only an interval, time alone can show; but we are in the meanwhile in a state of total uncertainty as to everything.'

'February 18, 1789.

'. . . The House of Lords have added a little more to the Queen, not thinking the House of Commons had done enough before. She is made guardian of all the younger part of the Royal Family, and they have given her all the houses and gardens in the country, which gives her the patronage of the rangers, housekeepers, apartments, etc. The House of Lords have also prevented a peerage to Prince William for the present, which seems an act of pure malice. I am told this has hurt the Prince of Wales more than all the rest. The Duke of York said yesterday upon it, in Alice's Coffee-house, where Elliot heard him, that it was very hard on his brother William, who had never done anything to offend Mr. Pitt; that as for himself, Mr. Pitt did very right to do him all the injury he could, for he certainly had opposed him, but that Prince William had never had an opportunity of doing him either good or harm. But the prevailing principle, not only with ministers but with all the party, and quite to a degree of passion and fury, is to consider the Prince of Wales, and everything that is suspected of the least attach-

ment to him, as a prey to be hunted down and destroyed without mercy. This, I assure you, is the private conversation of the ministers and the Queen's whole set. I learned some particulars at Burke's which I did not know before. In the first place, I heard a more correct account of the Chancellor's visit to Kew, and the opinion he gave of it himself. The Duke of York, who is perfectly to be depended on both for veracity and correctness, told Pelham and Burke that Warren had told him he had the Chancellor's leave to inform him (the Duke of York) and the Prince of Wales of what had passed, and of what the Chancellor thought of the King. Warren's account was this,—that the King talked rationally and collectedly enough to the Chancellor, but began to talk of foreign politics in a hurried sort of way. . . . That the Chancellor checked this sort of conversation, telling the King he had a nervous fever, and that he had not come to talk of business, as it might disturb his Majesty. The King submitted immediately, as if under a sort of awe or habit of obedience. Willis was present all the time. The King renewed his foreign conversation three times, and was three times stopped by the Chancellor. The Chancellor, returning from Kew with Warren, remarked that the King had certainly talked collectedly, but that he was obviously under a restraint, from which he seemed ready to break out the moment it should be withdrawn, and that he was by no means in a state to do business. To this I will add what the Duke of Portland told me this morning, that Warren had said to him a week ago, when th :

King's amendment was first announced, that the Duke would do wrong not to accept the government, for it was impossible the King should come out and resume his government in less than a year.'

'Pall Mall Court: February 20, 1789.

'The Chancellor yesterday informed the House of Lords of the great improvement in the King's health, and the prospect of his immediate recovery, and put off the bill to Tuesday, when he said there might be expected to be greater certainty on the subject. . . .

'I must tell you the account Sir G. Baker gives of the King to-day when he saw him at Kew this morning. He says that he was dressed to-day in his usual clothes, with a star on his coat. Baker complimented him on the occasion, and said, "I wish you joy, sir, of appearing again like a king, and I am glad to see that star once more." On which the King put his finger to his mouth and said, "Hush, hush! don't talk of stars, we must not talk of stars; you know I am *Mopsimus*, and don't like French mottoes." He then talked of something else more rationally, but once or twice more let a wild word or so escape him.'

'February 23, 1789.

'The Prince of Wales and the Duke of York have for this week gone repeatedly to Kew, desiring to see the King, but were constantly refused on one pretence or the other, though the Chancellor and many other strangers were admitted to him. The Prince at last wrote to the Queen on the subject, and after many

shifts and delays the Prince and the Duke of York were yesterday admitted. The meeting was extremely affecting and affectionate on both sides. The King, when he came to the door of the room where they were, stopped and said he was not yet able to go in, and cried very much, but after a little pause he said he found himself better, and came in. He embraced them both with the greatest tenderness, and shed tears on their faces, and both the Princes were much touched with the scene. The King did not touch at all on anything like business, but talked to the Prince about horses, and to the Duke about his regiment. The Queen was present, and walking to and fro in the room with a countenance and manner of great dissatisfaction; and the King every now and then went to her in a submissive and soothing sort of tone, for she has acquired the same sort of authority over him that Willis and his men have, and the King's mind is totally subdued and in a state of the greatest weakness and subjection. It is given out even by the Prince's friends that they observed nothing *wrong* or irrational in this visit, and it is material that they should not be thought to publish the contrary. It is not entirely true, however, as the King made several slips, one of which was that he told them he was the Chancellor. This circumstance, however, is not to be mentioned, for the reasons just given.

'The Chancellor is again getting about the Prince of Wales, persuading him that he is attached to him, and that he hates Pitt, which latter part is perfectly true; but he is the falsest and most treacherous character in

the world, and is much more likely to mislead the Prince than to serve him, or do anything else that is consistent or honourable.'[1]

'Park Street: February 26, 1789.

'I dined yesterday at Mr. Scott's, Wimpole Street, with Monsieur de la Luzerne, the French Ambassador, who is a sensible man, and they say a good sort of man, but very unlike the fashionable sort of thing we have generally had here. He was the French Ambassador to the Congress of America, and it was thought, I believe, an impertinence to send him here afterwards.'

'February 28.

'Warren told Lord Malmesbury yesterday that the King is *more* rational and *better* in his understanding now than he ever was before his illness. Yet I must tell you what his situation was the day before yesterday, when the Duke of York saw him for a considerable time. The Duke delivered up to him the keys of his drawers, etc., at Windsor, which the Prince of Wales had very properly taken away on the King's removal to

[1] After writing the last letter Sir Gilbert removed from a lodging into his house in Park Street, in which he had fondly hoped to be immediately joined by his family, but the sudden illness of his eldest boy determined Lady Elliot not to risk a long journey at an inclement season with a delicate child, and at the moment of setting forth she abandoned her intention. The sacrifice was great to both husband and wife, and his letters express his disappointment very feelingly. When Lady Elliot's change of plans became known, Lady Palmerston declared her belief that the whole family had been dead for the two last years, and that Sir Gilbert kept up the delusion of their existence for his own ends.

Kew, after sealing up everything in a very formal and regular way before proper witnesses. When the Duke of York gave the King the key of his papers, and I believe jewels, the King received it with a sort of extravagant fondness and joy, with many ridiculous actions and words expressive of his satisfaction in recovering it. He called it "my dear key, my favourite key," and took it to a window and *kissed* it for some time. This is quite unlike the King's own manner, and is indeed perfectly *unlike* sound reason in anybody. When the keys of the red and green boxes were given him, he threw them away in disgust, and said he hated them, and that he hated everything like business.'

'Park Street: Wednesday, March 4, 1789.

'I have seen all Lady Palmerston's children except the last. They are amazingly thriving. Even Henry, who used always to look so washy, has got quite stout, with a fine high colour. He is now a vastly pretty boy, still in petticoats, but they are measuring him for his first breeches to-day.

'I dined yesterday at the Duke of York's with the Prince and the Irish deputies. We were thirty-two at table. La Coste,[1] you know, is one of the Duke of York's pages, and is a great favourite, on account of his drollery. He waits at table behind the Duke's own chair, but he now and then takes a walk round the table and speaks to any of the company that he knows. He brought Sir Thomas Dundas yesterday some green sauce, and said to

[1] Ci-devant valet to Hugh Elliot.

him, "Avec cette sauce là on pourrait manger son grand-père." I dine again with the Irish and the Prince at Sir Thomas Dundas'. The paper I am writing for the Prince of Wales is intended as a memorial to be delivered by him to the King, and will be a justification of himself and an accusation of Pitt. It is in the form of a letter, and I find great difficulty in doing it to my mind, for it is expected to be a pretty full argument on all that has happened, and is yet not to depart too much from the manner in which the Prince may be supposed to write himself. Don't mention this to anybody.

'The Prince was uncommonly agreeable and captivating yesterday the whole time, and will send the Irish away delighted with him. Amongst other agreeablenesses he sang an excellent sea-song extremely well—a battle between a French and English ship. The French ship sank, and then the humanity and generosity of the "*Britons*, who *conquer* to *save*." All very excellent for giving a favourable impression.'

'Park Street: Saturday, March 7, 1789.

'The Duke of York saw the King two days ago, and the conversation was made up of childish remarks. . . He told him he intended to go to Hanover, and said he had given orders for the cabriolet, for the Queen *to drive herself*. . . .

'The Prince of Wales some time ago gave the Queen some papers to be delivered to the King. They were his correspondence with Mr. Pitt, and some little justification of his conduct. He wrote the day before yesterday to the

Queen desiring to know if she had delivered the papers, and desiring an interview with the King on the subject. The Queen sent him some shabby excuse for not answering that day (not choosing, in fact, to give any answer till she could see the Chancellor next morning); accordingly yesterday the Prince received her answer—that she had *mentioned* to the King that he had sent papers, but that he had not asked for them, and that as soon as he did she would lay them before him. She made no reply at all to the request for an interview. The Prince and the Duke of York are going to Kew today to demand an audience, and to ask, the King themselves whether he had seen the papers, and whether they may be allowed to give him further explanation on the subject. In the meanwhile the King is stated by the ministers to be *perfectly* well, and they have given notice of a message to the Houses on Tuesday, amounting to a resumption of his authority.

'Since writing this I have been obliged to go out, and have lost my whole day. The Prince received last night further answer from Kew. It was by a letter from the Queen to the Prince enclosing one from *the King* to *the Queen*, written with his own hand, but evidently dictated by Pitt or some of his people. It begins "My dearest Charlotte," and says he is deeply impressed with the consideration of all the uneasiness which his long illness has given her, and that he is desirous of preventing any further trouble to her. He therefore desires her to inform the Prince of Wales and *Frederick* that although he shall not neglect business

that is necessary, yet he does not propose to attend to any other matter, the tendency of which might be to agitate him, and declines entering into the consideration of any business not absolutely necessary. The Queen's letter, also in her own hand, begins "My *dearest* Son," and says that she has found an opportunity of mentioning the subject of the papers again to the King, and that she encloses a letter which she has received in consequence, etc. etc. I saw the originals of both letters to-day. It is a curious and clumsy artifice, to make the King write a letter to the Queen in the same house with him; if it were necessary to put his refusal in writing, why should he not have written to the Prince? The letter is manifestly not his own. You will observe the purport of it is to stop the Prince from any further attempt to have any communication with the King and Queen at all. It meets his application to the Queen as a *trouble* to her, which he is desirous of saving her in future, and he tells the Prince that he considers his representations both as matters which may agitate him and which are yet of *no importance*. Yet he will adopt measures which amount to a condemnation of the Prince's conduct and that of his friends, although he will not hear what he has to say in his defence. The Duke of York has been to Kew to-day, and has seen the King. The conversation was in general affectionate and rational, with one or two instances of singularity. . . .'

'March 10.

'There is to be a most prodigious illumination to-night. In Park Street we are content with flambeaux on the rails and candles in the windows. I hope our windows won't be broke. I am robbed of all my private gossip to-day by being sent for to Burlington House. I am very sorry for it, but it cannot be helped. Lord Apsley is going to be married to the youngest Miss Lennox, Lord Gerald's daughter. She is very handsome.'

'Park Street: March 11, 1789.

'The town was illuminated yesterday with a good deal of magnificence. Many houses had devices of different sorts executed in coloured lamps and transparent paintings, and the blaze or masses of light in some of the squares were fine enough. The prevailing devices were prodigiously ingenious—namely, G. R, with a crown in the middle, God save the King, etc. We agreed in Park Street to light up only to the street, but the mob chose it also to the Park, and John not being expeditious enough, I had a pane of plate-glass broke in the library window. I dined at Brookes' yesterday; and as I was coming away after dinner I saw the Palmerston coach stuck fast in the middle of the street, which was so full of coaches there was not room for a wheelbarrow more. I went down, and by creeping under horses and coaches, like a pickpocket who is escaping, I got there, and finding Lady Palmerston alone, I got in, leaving my Lord at Brookes', where he dined also. We went to Mrs. Crewe's and took her in, and then drove about the

street till almost twelve o'clock, which was rather worth while, although the company was boring, for Mrs. Crewe was in a nervous humour which is not entertaining.

'The Queen certainly drove about London to see the illuminations, I believe in Lady Bathurst's coach. She is to have a drawing-room soon, at which, it is said, she is not to speak to anyone, but people are to pass by her, and bow and curtsey. It is natural enough that she should wish to avoid the excessive fatigue and bore of speaking to such crowds, especially on such an occasion.'

'Thursday, March 12.

'Yesterday has not produced anything new of importance that I have heard. The Foreign Ministers went to Kew, and were admitted to the King, who spoke to them as usual. They say he appeared much altered, and looking very ill in body, but that they perceived nothing amiss in his conversation. The addresses of the two Houses were presented by the *white sticks*, and not by the Houses themselves, which is the usual way; but that method was thought too public for the King in his present convalescent state. Lord Malmesbury delivered his letter of resignation to Lord Carmarthen in the House of Lords the day before yesterday, as soon as the commissioners' speech was delivered, which was the first moment he could do it with propriety, as there was till then nothing to receive it. The letter desired Lord Carmarthen to lay him at His Majesty's feet, and humbly beg that he might be allowed to resign his office of ambassador, etc.'

'Park Street: Saturday, March 14, 1789.

'The King goes on exactly in the same way, seeing a few people that are friends, and doing no business himself of any kind. The Duke of York saw him yesterday, and found him a good deal agitated and unquiet, so as to appear by no means right. He still talked a great deal about his intention of going to Hanover. When the Foreign Ministers went the other day they were in an outer room, and young Willis was in boots, quite in undress, which rather surprised the Foreign Ministers.

'I can vouch for the truth of the following story:— On the day of the illumination the Princes dined with the Irish deputies at Lord Hertford's. The Prince and the Duke of York went away together in the Prince's coach, and were going to the opera. In some of the narrow streets the coach was stopped by other carriages, and the mob soon knew the Princes. They called "God save the King!" while the Prince, letting down his glasses, joined them in calling very heartily, and hallooed "Long live the King!" and so forth with the mob. But one man called out to him to cry Pitt for ever! or God bless Pitt! The Prince said he would not; but called out, "Fox for ever, and God bless Fox!" The man, and I believe some others, began to insist on his saying Pitt for ever; and I believe he said "*Damn Pitt*—Fox for ever!" on which a man pulled the coach-door open, and the Prince endeavoured to jump out amongst them in order to defend himself; but the Duke of York kept him back with one arm,

and with the other struck the man on the head, and called to the coachman to drive on, which he did at a great pace, the coach-door flapping about as they went; and so they got to the opera. From the opera the Prince, accompanied by some of his friends, among whom was Tom Pelham, would *walk* to Carlton House; and from thence he chose also to walk abroad the streets to see the illuminations. But they persuaded him first to call at Brookes'. They accordingly made their way on foot through the crowd along Pall Mall. He was soon known, but not insulted; and several people called "God bless your Highness!" which he was much pleased with. They also called "Long live the King!" which he always joined in as loud as any of them. At St. James' he fell in with a gang of butchers, with marrow-bones and cleavers, who knew him, and began immediately to play before him; and he found it impossible to get rid of them. They accordingly cleared the way for him, playing and shouting all the way up St. James' Street. When they came to Brookes', they gave him three cheers; and the Prince in return hallooed out "Long live the King!" and gave them three cheers himself. He then sent them ten guineas to drink. He heard at the same time that Lord Charlemont and another Irish deputy were on the other side of the street, and could not get across; on which he gave the chairmen nine guineas to help them across. From Brookes' Pelham persuaded him to order his coach and go home, which he did. He was just a little elevated with his dinner and claret, but not

drunk. This sort of spirit is to the credit of his spirit and natural manners; and he is out of luck for not being extremely popular, for a tenth part of his popular qualities, and indeed of his good qualities, has made the fortune of many princes and favourites of the people. You may judge also of the insolence with which Pitt's friends treat him. Lord Malmesbury saw Lord Carmarthen the day before yesterday. The conversation was as civil and friendly as possible. Lord Malmesbury asked Lord Carmarthen whether he had shown his letter to the King. Lord Carmarthen said he had not shown him the letter, for they *did not talk very particularly* to him on these subjects; but that he had mentioned the subject of it to the King. Lord Malmesbury asked what he said. Lord Carmarthen answered that he said *nothing*. All this is very like what we have been expecting as the plan of ministers—to use the King's name as if he were well, when in fact he is as incapable as ever to act for himself.

'They have taken away Lord Lothian's gold stick, and have also turned out the Duke of Queensberry. Lord Delawarr is to be Lord of the Bedchamber in his room.'

Part of this letter is missing.

'. . . Miss Pitt (Rivers) is a most violent politician, and besides that is a famous *animal magnetist*. She attends *Dr. Mainaduc*, and is called the most *skilful* person in London in that profound science. You know Mrs. Beckford was supposed to be cured by it. What

surprises me is that Frederick North, who has all the cleverness and drollery and agreeableness of his family, and whom I should have thought the most likely man in the world to laugh at that nonsense, is one of its greatest dupes, and is a firm believer in the whole of it. He not only practises on himself but on all his friends. Miss Ann Anguish has lately been excessively ill of a most violent and painful disorder, which is now supposed to be gout. Fred North, not being able to persuade her to try magnetism, went and described her case to Miss Prescott, Dr. Mainaduc's female associate, and she was then thrown into one of her fits, during which she described all that she felt, and informed them by that means of Miss Anguish's complaints; all which Fred North brought back to the Anguishes as gospel.'

'Tuesday, March 17, 1789.

'One can hardly conceive anything so strong as sending the King abroad in his present situation; but I don't know how to disbelieve it when the King is saying every day himself that he is to go there,[1] and talks of all his plans and arrangements as of a thing determined on. The people about him know that he does so, and they must either confess that he is stark mad, or that his journey to Hanover is a real project. . . .

'I told you on Saturday I was going to dine at Douglas' chambers. The company was Lord and Lady

[1] To Hanover.

Hambden, Lady Ann [1] and Lady Margaret,[2] George North and his wife, Ann and Charlotte North, Colonel Fullarton, and me. It was very magnificent, well served, with all sorts of wines, liqueurs, ice, dessert, and cards after dinner. I wish his passion for fashion may not lead him too fast, but his income is very good at present.'

'Park Street: Sunday, March 22, 1789.

'The journey to Hanover continues to be believed universally. I have no fresh intelligence of the King, and I suppose he is going on in the same way. The Prince of Wales has had a smart little tussle with the Queen, in which they came to strong and open declarations of hostility. He told her that she had connected herself with his enemies, and had entered into plans for destroying and disgracing him and all her children, and that she countenanced misrepresentations of his conduct to the King, and prevented the explanations he wished to give. She was violent and lost her temper; and the conversation ended, I believe, by her saying that she would not be the channel of anything that either he or the Duke of York had to say to the King, and that the King did not mind what either he or the Duke of York either did or said or thought. I do not think such a conversation well judged on the part of the Prince. If he meant to make any representations to the Queen it should have been done with . . .' (*end missing.*)

[1] Lady Ann Lindsay. [2] Lady Margaret Fordyce.

'Russell Street: Thursday, March 26, 1789.

'I have never seen a greater crowd at the Court, so great that I was never within a room of the Queen. I took care to be seen by as many people of all sorts as I could, and reckon my court as well paid as if I had accomplished her Majesty. *All* the women, with only two or three exceptions, had caps with "God save the King!" on them—*our* ladies as well as the others. *All of us* went to Court.

'The King is in London to-day—I believe for the first time since his illness. He persists in going to St. Paul's, although every means have been tried to dissuade him.'

'Park Street: Saturday, March 28, 1789.

'I had yesterday my grand feast, and came off with honour. We were thirteen. We drank tea, sang, danced to the harpsichord, and supped—that is to say, it was not a supper, but an *ambigu*. Perhaps you don't know in the country what an *ambigu* is. It is supper and dessert both on the table at once, and this makes the ambiguity. I assure you we all looked very splendid, by the help of all our bright candlesticks, branches, and girandoles.

'I was yesterday at Carlton House on a little consultation, which sounds small, but was neither uncurious nor quite unimportant. There is to be a concert at Windsor, given by the King, on Thursday. The Princes were not invited for a long time; but at last, the day before yesterday, the Duke of York saw the

Queen, who delivered to him a message from the King, which the Duke of York wrote down the substance of, as correctly as he could remember it, the same day. Her words, as written by the Duke of York, were thus: "I am commissioned by the King to acquaint the Prince of Wales and you that there is to be a concert here on Thursday next, to which you will be very welcome, if you like to come; but it is right to tell you that it is given to those who have *supported us* through the late business, and *therefore* you may possibly not choose to be present." The Duke of York tried to laugh the thing off, and said—"Then it is given to the *whole nation*, for all parties have supported the King according to their different opinions of his interests." But the Queen would not let him off so, and said—"No, no; I don't choose to be misunderstood. I mean expressly that we have asked the ministers, and those persons, in short, who have *voted* in Parliament for the King and me; and we have also invited the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, *and the Princess Sophia*" (the Duke of Gloucester's daughter). *N.B.*—She used never to be asked to the Queen's House. The Duke of York was amazingly angry, as you may suppose, and said that he did not understand the sort of distinction attempted to be made; that his brother and himself did not yield to any person in the kingdom for loyalty and affection for the King; and since this sort of distinction was to be made, he should certainly not come to the concert. He added, however, that he should inform the Prince of Wales, who would act as he chose.

The Prince of Wales and the Duke of York were both in a violent rage on this attack of the Queen, which charged them in plain words with being enemies to the King; and they were for sending strong letters or papers of remonstrance and justification to the King and to the Queen. The Duke of York came to Burke about it, who went to Carlton House, and was very much of the Prince's mind for strong measures, and for an open and explicit explanation. But he advised the Prince to consult his friends first. It was accordingly agreed to assemble some of his friends the next morning, and I was sent for with the rest. The Duke of Portland, to whom Burke went overnight, was very much against any strong measures.[1] I thought it more important to keep the King's house open to the Princes, and to avoid any rupture which might furnish an opportunity for excluding them, than to make their justification at present. It was agreed to support this opinion, and I went with Burke yesterday morning prepared to give this advice, which it was thought it might be difficult to enforce on the Princes. We found only Sir Thomas Dundas, and the Duke of York soon came to us. The Prince of Wales had sprained his ankle, and could not get up. We found that the Duke of

[1] 'Minto: Friday, April 3.

'It is lucky there was a *cool* head in the party like the Duke of Portland's, for, if I may venture to say it, Mr. Burke's advice was the worst possible. It is certainly material for the Princes to keep up an intercourse with the King, and the only means by which they will ever be able to justify their conduct during his illness.'—*Lady Elliot to Sir Gilbert.*

York had come over to the moderate opinion on reflection, and on hearing that Colonel Goldsworthy, who was present when the King gave this commission to the Queen to invite the Princes, reported that the King only said the Princes were to be invited, and that they were always to be considered as invited to everything *of course*; but had not added anything about the other persons who were invited, or who had supported him, or that the Princes might not like to meet them. So that this was an addition of the Queen's own, and intended, I suppose, to prevent the Princes from accepting the invitation, of which she would afterwards have made a handle against them. Burke therefore advised the Duke of York to write a letter to the Queen accepting the invitation and touching very lightly on the offensive part of the message. The Duke of York sat down immediately and wrote the *enclosed*, which I send you in his own hand, as it may be a curiosity in the country. Do not show it, however, except to Miss Elliot. I did not think it quite satisfactory, and I altered it to the enclosed paper, which you will see is my hand. The Duke of York immediately copied mine fair, carried it off to the Prince of Wales, who approved, and it was sent off. Soon afterwards Lord Loughborough came in, and then Lord North, and then Lord Stormont, but the business was already despatched. They approved, however, perfectly what had been done. Here is a most copious account of this *important* affair about a concert. But it tells one a great deal, and shows something of the Queen.

'You see that the Princes are represented in the King's family by the Queen herself as enemies of their father, and yet they are expressly denied any opportunity to defend or justify themselves to the King. They have both been attempting all possible means to have a hearing on this subject, and have never, either by direct application or by watching every opportunity, been able to obtain a minute's conversation with the King alone. He is watched like a prisoner, and is never out of sight of one or other of the head-keepers. This is really his situation at this moment. You may guess whether he or the Queen is really *King*.'

Copy of an original letter by the Duke of York to the Queen.

'Madam,—Having delivered, according to your Majesty's orders, your message to my brother, I lose no time in acquainting your Majesty, that, anxious as we are [and we trust have ever shown ourselves, both in our public and private conduct] to seize every opportunity of testifying our warmest and most dutiful affection and attention to his Majesty, we beg your Majesty to believe that we cannot allow any circumstance whatever to debar us from the happiness of paying our duty to the King [when he is so good as to permit it], and that we shall have the highest pleasure in attending his Majesty at the concert on Thursday.'[1]

[1] The sentences in brackets were added by Sir Gilbert.

'Park Street: Thursday, April 2, 1789.

'The expectation of a dissolution seems to increase. . . . There seems an expectation that the elections will go much against us, and indeed that can be the only motive for dissolving the present Parliament. . . . There is a little difference between our present prospects and those which you will find in some of my former magnificent letters of this session; but the wheel is always turning, and the only way of avoiding the vicissitudes of fortune is to keep one's mind as independent of them as possible. I have been very happy in not getting so much intoxicated with the approach of riches and power as to have lost a moment's tranquillity from the disappointment which has followed, and I have indeed fought a battle with myself, as well as I could, to avoid being very savage as to the cause which was to produce such great things for us—I mean the King's horrible distemper. I certainly do not feel any new affection or respect for the King, whom I do not think either better or worse of for being mad. Nothing can appear more preposterous or more disgusting than the violent enthusiasm of humanity and loyalty in those who have so manifest an interest in the subject of their joy. I do not know, on the other hand, whether it is *possible* for us, who have such powerful interests the other way, to feel either the same compassion for the King's misfortunes, or the same satisfaction in his relief, as if we were not concerned in these events. But still I think that, on reflection, we should wish to sacrifice as little of our

natural feelings to our interests as we are able, and I would therefore persuade myself that such a horrible calamity to any other person as insanity, is one of those means by which I would not enter into power. And with this reflection I am certainly better reconciled to the present disappointment of these views, and to waiting for their accomplishment till it may happen by the usual means. I confess, however, that this very cause, whether I am able to avoid wishing for it or not, is likely to be the first that will produce any considerable change in government. The King's perfect recovery seems, as yet, by no means ascertained, and the manner in which he is still managed *proves* that those who are about him have not a thorough confidence in his cure. I have heard, however, nothing new on this subject. White's ball at the Pantheon was the subject of conversation yesterday, and I believe it was excessively fine. The room is certainly much the finest I ever saw, and the decorations and illuminations were better than they had ever been there before. They were managed by Wyatt. There was a prodigious enthusiasm of loyalty, as you may suppose. Dr. Willis was constantly surrounded by a crowd pressing to look on him, and paying their court to him. He was, I believe, all but mad himself on the occasion, and seemed out of himself with transport. He supped at the table with Mr. Pitt, Lord and Lady Chatham, and the Duchess of Gordon. The King's health was drunk at supper, and *three times three* performed by the company in all the supper-rooms at the same moment;

and the ball was concluded by the band playing "God save the King!" and *all the gentlemen singing* the words along with it, which being encored was performed again. It would have been curious to know how many, in the midst of this paroxysm of love for his Majesty, really cared a straw about him. I had my intelligence of this first from Miss Palmer and Sir Joshua Reynolds, who were there, as well as from several other ladies. You will not suppose I was there myself. I believe very few of our party were; and the other people are endeavouring to make a clamour on that account, especially against the Princes, for refusing to come and keeping others away. The Court ladies are to attend the Brookes' ball, by way of censuring ours for staying away from White's. But all these petticoat politics are not very interesting, so you shall hear no more of them at present. Fitzherbert is going immediately to the Hague. He is not to have the same rank or pay, however, as Lord Malmesbury had. He is to be envoy extraordinary, with the pay of ambassador in ordinary, in all about 4,000*l*. This post, however, was promised to Eden whenever it should open, and the offer is now gone to him. If he accepts, Fitzherbert is to succeed him in Spain.'

Lady Elliot's view of the reverse of fortune commented upon by her husband is shown in her reply:—

'I have quite made up my mind to all the disappointments of this winter, and have a strong inclination

to believe "whatever is is best." Though, when riches and honour stare one in the face, they must seem welcome, yet I am clear a family is seldom much richer in the end from any high political situation; the habits of expense increase and become so familiar, that thousands become as hundreds were, and much less is ever saved than is at first proposed. . . . Lady Palmerston, you know, has always called you Sir Bashful Constant, as being in love with your own wife, and I assure you I feel very proud of this particularity. . . . You know as well as I can tell you the satisfaction it is to me to read all the things which lead to the conviction of your love and esteem; both are equally essential to my happiness, and, to say the truth, are so much the most important articles towards it, together with the health and welfare of our children, that, feeling secure in possessing them, I am perhaps what may be thought *too* indifferent to any worldly acquirements, though I do not see either the merit or use of making myself unhappy or uncomfortable in search of what may never be attained. I can assure you I do not dare say how little concern I have felt in the disappointments of this winter—I mean those that relate to money and ambition; and I believe I should sink much in the good opinion and favour of your relations, if I was to acknowledge how very indifferent I am upon such subjects. I cannot conceive their appearing important to those who have much more satisfactory grounds for happiness and content.'

Sir Gilbert to Lady Elliot.

'Park Street: April 4, 1789.

'The reports about a dissolution fluctuate, as it might be expected they would. . . . Jack Payne says it is not to be, and although his information is not much to be relied on, it shows that the Prince has received some intelligence about it. Tom Grenville[1] says so too, and I understand Charles Fox said so yesterday. The idea is that it was once intended, and is still wished by Pitt, but that it was mentioned very lately to the King for the first time, and that he was violently against it. This was understood to be the case before his illness, and that he would never hear of it when proposed some time ago by Pitt. . . . I heard to-day that orders are actually given to get the yachts in readiness to carry the King to Hanover. The Duke of Portland seemed to believe this. The King is certainly to go to St. Paul's. Preparations are now making in the church. Every means has been tried to dissuade him, but in vain. If he is not as sensible, he is at least as obstinate as ever. He is more loquacious, if possible, than before his illness, and talks amazingly quick, and a great deal of politics to people to whom he ought not. . . . The Colchester petition was determined to-day in favour of our candidate, Mr. Tierney. The petition for Westminster began to-day. I attended the ballot yesterday, but

[1] Right Honourable Thomas Grenville, brother of Lord Buckingham and Lord Grenville.

luckily escaped being drawn. I was pressed very much to be nominee for Lord John Townshend, but could not undertake it on account of Impey's business. I gave Impey notice yesterday that I should bring him on the day after the Easter recess, if we were not dissolved sooner. . . . I went the day before yesterday to Miss Vanneck's assembly, and saw a great deal of world, who seemed rather surprised to see me there, but made me very welcome. I went home with Lady Beauchamp and the Malmesburys to supper at Lord Beauchamp's. Lady Beauchamp is not *fine*, nor is she without understanding, but she has a desperate desire for admiration, which she cannot hide, and this always makes women look and behave more or less like fools. I have read Prince Hoare's tragedy, and like it extremely. I think it would succeed on the stage.[1] . . . I am going to-day to dine at Lord Palmerston's. Lady Palmerston is gone to-day to Bath with Mrs. Culverden in a hurry, on account of their grandmother Mrs. Mann's illness. She is dying, I believe. Fox, Sheridan, Mrs. Crewe, the Malmesburys, Bouverie, etc., are to dine to-day with us at Lord Palmerston's. My tenant Mr. Sumner is to stand for the *county* of Surrey on Pitt's interest. It is thought a strong measure to start a young *nabob* for a county, who generally like old families. This Sumner, at a meeting in Surrey lately, asked, "Who are these *Russells?* Who has heard of the family of Russells in the county of Surrey?" He was talking of the *Duke of Bedford's* family. . . . I saw

[1] Kemble, as manager of Drury Lane, had just refused it.

the Duke of Portland to-day. His knee is doing well. John Hunter told him soon after the accident happened that he had the greatest desire in the world to know and to see how the knee-pan cures itself of a fracture, but that it is almost impossible ever to see the process of nature on the occasion, as it would be necessary to have an opportunity of examining it *before* the case was complete, and that this could only happen if he had the *good fortune* to have a patient *die* during the cure, and that he would give anything in the world to have this opportunity. The Duke laughed, but told him very gravely that if he should die on this occasion, he assured him Mr. Hunter *should have him* to do what he pleased with, and to examine as much as he liked. Hunter says they would have tried the experiment on some capital convicts, but he does not know how to break the knee-pan, and that it can only be done by accident. No animal but man has a knee-pan.'[1]

'Park Street: Thursday, April 9, 1789.

'The general opinion now is that Parliament will not be dissolved. I shall consider it as a great escape for me if there is no dissolution, and I hope never to have so bad a prospect of a seat in Parliament on any

[1] 'The Duke of Portland broke his knee-pan on the first day of March, coming out of Sir T. Dundas'. He made a little false step, by which both his heels seemed to fly from under him, and he fell backwards, but not to the ground, as his servants caught him. This was all that happened. He felt little or no pain, but heard a crack. The knee-pan was drawn up a couple of inches or so up his thigh. It was set by John Hunter immediately.'—*Letter of March* 7.

other occasion. I believe I told you nothing about the Windsor concert, and I have not much to tell now. The King was remarkably attentive and kind to the Princes; the Queen quite the contrary, and it is said appeared dowdy and glum at the King's behaviour to them. Before the place at which the Chancellor sat at supper there was some device in which his arms were introduced with a motto alluding to the support given by him to the King. Before Pitt there was a Fame supporting Pitt's arms and the number 268, the first majority in the House of Commons, written in sugar-plums or sweetmeats. At the concert the music had most of it some allusion to politics. All this is quite new at Court, and most excessively indecent, as the King is always expected to be of *no party*, and it is an unconstitutional thing that he should even express openly either favour or disfavour on account of any vote in Parliament. But it smells very strongly of the petticoat, or rather of *breeches* under petticoats. It is also said that the King showed very marked attention to Lady Pembroke;—that the Queen seemed uneasy, and tried to prevent it as often as she could; but that the Queen being at last engaged with somebody in conversation the King slipped away from her, and got to the other end of the room where Lady Pembroke was, and there was extremely gallant, and that Lady Pembroke seemed distressed and behaved with a becoming and maidenish modesty. I do not answer for any part of this story about Lady Pembroke.'

'Park Street: April 20, 1789.

. We got there (to Sundon) on Wednesday in time for dinner. On Thursday we rode to Woburn Abbey, the Duke of Bedford's park, and after riding through the park, and particularly through a part of it which is planted with *evergreens* of all sorts for winter enjoyment, we saw the stables and the kennel. The house we could only look at from without, for it is only shown on Mondays. The Duke is altering and enlarging it at a great expense, although nobody ever inhabits it but Mrs. Hill, an old madame. In the stables were about forty horses. There are sometimes sixty. He has about ninety couple of hounds. His kennel is just finished, and cost 4,000*l*. Yet he seldom uses any of these great establishments. He rides generally the same horse or two himself; has but two, or three, or four servants out with him hunting; and never mounts any friend though his stable is full of horses. . . .

'We rode about twenty miles that day; the country is far from pretty, very open, and with little or no wood. They have less fuel even than we, and the poor burn *cow-dung*, which they scrape off the ground and set up to burn as we do *divots*. On Friday we went to Luton on our way to town. We had very little time, but saw what was most worth attention—the pictures. I never saw a house so crammed with fine pictures. All the bedrooms and little dressing-rooms are full of very fine pictures of the best masters. There is but half of the house furnished. This half is a vast thing, but not particularly beautiful in point of architecture;

it is done by Adams. I got to town too late for dinner, so went in the evening to Lord Herbert's, where I ought to have dined. I found nobody but their two selves and Miss Pitt (John Pitt). You never saw a nicer couple than Lord and Lady Herbert.[1] She has got well again, which is a sort of miracle. They are so handsome and so *clever*, and their house so new and newly fitted up, and he so contented and so good-humoured, and she so apparently so, that it is quite comfortable to see. . . . Sylvester Douglas' marriage to Miss North is now very much talked of and believed in. He is constantly in Lord North's house, and from Saturday to Monday generally at Bushy. . . . People say Miss North is dying of love for him, but she has died these deaths so often that I imagine this death will not be more mortal than the rest. . . .'

'Park Street: Saturday, April 25, 1789.

'This week has been full of distractions and of idle business and busy idleness, besides which I had some busy business to fill up the intervals; and I have been all this day engaged at the trial, which is just up, and leaves me but a short interval to write you before I must go to dinner. I owe you an account of Brookes' ball and St. Paul's, but I cannot undertake a copious

[1] Elizabeth Beauclerk, second daughter of Topham Beauclerk, Esquire, married Lord Herbert in 1787. Lady Palmerston, in a letter which mentioned their intended marriage, wrote:—'Miss E. Beauclerk is, in my opinion, perfection; the elegance of her manner—her beauty—her entire ignorance of her own power, make her the most interesting little mortal I ever saw.'

one of either of these things, at least at present. The ball was as fine as the place would admit of, but it was impossible to make amends for the defects of the Opera House on such an occasion. There were 1,200 and odd people, besides the waiters and attendants—male and female—and there were 300 waiters. You may suppose what a squeeze it was. Some of the ladies had not once found a chair or *table* to sit down upon at four o'clock in the morning, and were ready to drop with fatigue. Nor could they even get away, for it was impossible to get up their chairs or coaches. Some of them at last betook themselves humbly to the *floor*, on which they sat. The *ode* was a dull poem, and though delivered by Mrs. Siddons, had but a *flat* effect. The only fault, however, to be found with the entertainment was the great numbers who partook of it, and you probably do not regret that you did not increase the number. I got home between four and five, and was obliged to be at the trial in the morning.

'The next day I was up at six for St. Paul's. Lord Palmerston carried me. We went in procession with the House of Commons, and were about two hours going. This day answered extremely well as a show, and was affecting in some moments of it. Our places were in galleries on each side of the choir, and from the end of the gallery where I sat I saw down the church to the great door fronting Ludgate Hill. The whole length of the church was lined on each side by the Grenadiers of the Guards and the beefeaters, who formed a wide passage or lane for the procession. Beyond the

soldiers were the people who had got admission into the church; and under the dome were piled up, to a great height all round, 6,000 children from the different charity-schools in the city, in their different habits and colours. This was by far the most interesting part of the show. You may see this any year, for they are brought to St. Paul's, and placed in the same order one day every year, and I think it will be worth your while if you *ever* come within sight of St. Paul's again. After the House of Commons and of Peers, etc., were seated, a signal was made by which notice was given at Buckingham House, and then the King and Queen, etc., set out. When they arrived at the Park, the drums and fifes of the Guards all struck up, and continued till the whole party was assembled and marshalled at the great door. As soon as they began to move up the church, the drums stopped, and the organ began; and when the King approached the centre all the 6,000 children set up their little voices and sang part of the Hundredth Psalm. This was the moment that I found most affecting; and without knowing exactly why, I found my *eyes running over*, and the bone in my throat, which was the case with many other people. I had not seen the King or Queen before since his illness, and I was much struck with the alteration in him. Indeed, the Queen is also much thinner than she was. But the King is quite an object of thinness, and appears extremely weak by his manner of walking. The place for the King and Queen was at the entrance of the choir, between the two doors, and fronting the altar.

They sat on two grand chairs of State under a canopy. I was so much above them that I had but a bird's-eye view of them, and could not observe the King's countenance distinctly. All I saw therefore was, that his face was as sharp as a knife, and that his eyes appeared therefore more prominent than before. . . . I am told that he appeared affected when he first came in, and that during the reading of the prayer for himself, prepared for the occasion, he was so much moved as to shed tears. The Queen certainly did. In general, however, the King's manner was apparently indifferent; and he looked about with his opera-glass and spoke to the Queen during the greatest part of the service, very much as if he had been at a play. He was dressed in the Windsor uniform, had on a greatcoat which reached to his ankles, and was probably intended to conceal his legs, which are extremely thin. Others say it was to keep him warm, as he is excessively chilly. The service was the whole morning service, litany, and communion service, and all with the addition of several very long occasional prayers; and it was *chanted* as is done in the cathedral service, so that it was extremely long and tedious. The Bishop of London preached; but I could not hear a syllable where I sat. It was a courtly sermon, and contained a good deal of court politics; but, I hear, was dull enough.

'We waited two hours in St. Paul's Churchyard without hats, being full dressed, in a high wind, before we got away; and I was, for one, so tired, that I went to bed at ten o'clock.'

'I must go this instant, or I shall be too late for the *Bell* as well as for dinner. God bless you all! Love for the children. I will take care of Anny's doll, etc.'

'Park Street: Saturday, May 2, 1789.

'The business in the House of Commons went off once more yesterday without a division, and stands for Monday. I shall not give you any particular account of this business, which you will see in the papers. The general idea of it is this:—Hastings has presented a petition to the House of Commons complaining of the chargers, and particularly of Burke by name, for stating in their speeches matter which is not contained in the articles of impeachment, and which is more criminal than what the articles contain, and he says these matters are false. He gives four instances, three from last year and one from this. That instance is Burke's having said in the course of his speech that "Mr. Hastings had murdered Nuncomar by the hands of Sir E. Impey." Mr. Pitt allows that these instances, which relate to what was said last year, cannot be attended to because there was no complaint at the time. Besides which, we shall prove that the complaints are false in point of fact. Burke did not say what is imputed to him. But Pitt has signified his intention to support the last complaint about Nuncomar, and to censure Burke by a vote of the House. There is not a shadow nor pretence of justice or propriety in this, but it proves very clearly two material points: one that Pitt means now to protect

Hastings, and to put an end to the trial if possible; the other that the Queen is all-powerful.'

'Park Street: Tuesday, May 5, 1789.

'We have at last got complete summer weather. Our trees are all in full leaf, and the park is in its bloom. This does not hinder our neighbours to the right and left from pining and striving for a change of situation. Lord Malmesbury is in treaty for Lady Clifford's house in Spring Gardens, and Lady Palmerston is as desirous as ever of removing to a more central situation.

'. . . The House voted a censure on Burke yesterday, and incurred themselves by that act a degree of dishonour and infamy which they will not easily recover, while I believe the world thinks Burke and the rest of us are only rendered the more distinguished and illustrious. The trial proceeded to-day as if nothing had happened, except that Burke spoke on the subject of the censure against himself, and laid it to the Court in Westminster Hall in a manner which did not leave the disgrace of it on him.

'. . . One result of this proceeding in the House of Commons yesterday will be that I shall drop Impey entirely, at least while the present state of politics continues. For this I shall give my reasons at large, and shall therefore speak on the subject of yesterday's debate. . . .'

'Saturday, May 9, 1789.

'I saw the Exhibition yesterday for the first time, and it is so bad I do not think I shall return there. Sheridan's portrait is the only very fine thing I saw there. Sir Joshua has many pictures, but I do not admire them much; his principal one is a Cymon and Iphigenia. . . . I saw also an exhibition of pictures bought by Macklin to make engravings from for the English poets. Among these are several of Sir Joshua, Gainsborough, Opie, Hamilton of Rome, and Angelica, which are good enough, but the rest are in general sad stuff; and the arts do not appear to flourish much in Europe at present, notwithstanding the immense encouragement which is given to them. Gainsborough's pictures are selling for 200*l.* to 500*l.* a-piece. Bad as we are, I believe our school is as good as any other in Europe, if not better. I have not yet seen the new Shakespeare Gallery, where the pictures painted for Boydell's grand edition of Shakespeare are collected.

'I was last night at the Duchess of Ancaster's at a masquerade, where we had all the beauty and fashion of London. There was certainly a great deal of beauty, and I think women never were handsomer than they now are, or at least never understood better how to exhibit it.'

'Sheen: Monday, May 18, 1789.

'I came to Sheen yesterday with the Palmerstons, and dined and slept at their house. To-day I have

been to see Lady Northampton and Isabella,[1] and am now at Mrs. Culverden's, where I dine, and return to town in the evening. Before I say more of ordinary occurrences, I must tell you that I have at last spoken to Elliot (of Wells) on the grand subject which I have mentioned to you. The day before yesterday we had a grand pleasuring party to the town in the morning, to dinner at the London Tavern, to Astley's in the evening, and to supper at Michael Angelo Taylor's. The party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Culverden, Emma Godfrey, Miss Whitworth, Mr. Francis and three daughters, Lord Palmerston, Windham, Sylvester Douglas, and myself. We assembled at Mrs. Culverden's. Among the carriages were two chariots, and it was so managed that in one of these Elliot and H —— went alone together. I thought this a strong measure, and I knew it was not his doing, for he could no more take the lead in such a plan than *avoid being led* into it by the ladies; for he has not activity enough even to avoid action. During the whole of the day, which lasted twelve hours in various employments, Elliot was kept possession of, and it was plain that the other ladies co-operated in this arrangement; but H——'s own vigilance and ingenuity and eagerness were conspicuous among the rest, and would not have escaped *shorter sight* than mine.

'. . . The next morning I came down to breakfast resolved to attack him. I began speaking about his

[1] Isabella, daughter of Hugh Elliot by his first marriage. She was at this time at school at Richmond.

mother—his own plans of life—and at last came very naturally and easily to a conclusion that he might do extremely well while he was single, but that it was impossible he should marry while his mother lived, unless he met with an advantageous match, or unless his own income should improve. As soon as he had acknowledged this, as if he never had the smallest idea to the contrary, I fell foul of him, I dare say to his infinite horror and dismay, and not without some nervousness and terrors on my own part who was to be the assailant. "This," says I, "brings me to a subject which I have for some time wished to speak to you about. It is a subject of extreme delicacy, and such as none but a true friend has any right to interfere in, and such as even he must feel a great backwardness to engage in. But you know that Burke has taught us that *delicacy* is the lowest of all virtues, and when it interferes with higher duties is a vice." You may imagine his ghastly whiteness while I walked to and fro delivering this *portentous* preface. "I must first ask you," says I, "whether there is anything between you and H——." He had just power to assure me not. I then told him that the manner in which they had singled each other out, of which he was conscious enough, had attracted my attention as likely to lead to consequences which he might not foresee so well himself. He answered me there was nothing whatever between them; that he was very particularly uneasy all Saturday on our pleasuring party, and that he had had the worst *luck* that ever man had; and then he told me how he

had always found himself, he did not know how, left alone with her, or placed next to her, and that he had felt so seriously *chagrined* the whole day (this is his expression), that when he found himself alone with her in the chariot, he was so chagrined that he did not speak one word till they got to Newgate, and then he only informed her that it was Newgate; that he could hardly prevail on himself to speak the whole time of dinner; and that, when he was put again in the chariot with her and her younger sister C——, C—— said he *must sit* in the middle, where she was herself, but he declined, and she (C——) afterwards took notice that *he did not speak.*

'This affair, thank God! is entirely over.'

'Park Street: Tuesday.

'Our dinner at Sheen, on Sunday, at Lord Palmerston's, consisted of Lord and Lady Palmerston, Mrs. Crewe, Sir Joshua and Miss Palmer, Fitzherbert, Cholmondeley, Sylvester Douglas, Elliot, and me. Everybody returned to town after dinner except the Palmerstons and me. We passed the evening, reading and chatting, very pleasantly. It is a prodigious great magnificent old-fashioned house, with pleasure-grounds consisting of seventy acres—pieces of water, artificial mounts, and so forth. There will be a great deal to do in repairing the house before it is comfortable, in modern ideas, and Lord Palmerston seems undetermined whether to keep it or not, but I think he will keep it. To give you an idea of Lady Palmerston's

perseverance in her junketing humour, she was yesterday morning at Sheen, gave a great dinner in town, went to a great assembly, thence to Ranelagh, came home at one o'clock and dressed for a guinea masquerade at the Opera House, where she went with Lord Palmerston. I know of no news for you to-day, except that there has been a long and intricate story of a duel between Mr. Lenox and the Duke of York, which I cannot enter on to-day.'

'May 21.

'. . . There are some fashionable amours coming out I hear, and likely to make an *éclat*; but I know so little of the truth of reports, that you must not repeat it from me.

'. . . All these are established as quietly and avowedly as if they were marriages. There is no woman, who is not frightful, that one can be at all sure of, be her situation, her manners, or appearance, what it may, and the laws of nature seem to predominate completely over those of society. If this be so, and if it is written in our natures that it must go on, certainly the less said about it the better; and it is no advantage to convert these disorders into tragical events as they used to be; the other set, whose wives were young when different manners were in fashion, are lucky. Sheridan is a great gallant and intriguer among the fine ladies. He appears to me to be a strange choice for any lady who *may* choose, having a red face and an *ill* look as ever I saw. But he employs a great deal of art, with a great deal of pains, to gratify, not the

proper passion in such affairs, but vanity; and he deals in the most intricate plotting and under-plotting, like a Spanish play.'

'Saturday, May 30, 1789.

'You will see so much in the papers about the Duke of York's duel that I believe I must attempt a short account of that matter, although I am not very particularly informed about it.[1] Mr. Lenox had been amusing himself all this winter with abusing and insulting the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York in the most scurrilous and blackguard way, both behind their backs and sometimes to their faces. You must know that this is the *ton* of the Court or Queen's party, who imagine that they cannot pay their court better than by marking in every way they can think of their enmity to the Princes. It was the more blackguard in Lenox as he lived a good deal with both the Princes, and was, indeed, for some time, hardly ever out of the Duke of York's house, whom he bored extremely. Lenox, you know, was graciously *forced* into the Duke of York's regiment, against the rules, or at least common practice, of the army, over all the officers' heads, and without so much as an intimation to the Duke, who was the colonel, and I believe it is the *only* instance of such a promotion taking place without the colonel's being consulted, or at least acquainted with it. This made a great noise in the army, and particularly

[1] It will be seen that when Sir Gilbert was subsequently told the story by the Prince of Wales himself, the version given in the text proved to be 'pretty right.'

in the Guards, and most particularly in the Coldstream regiment, which is the Duke of York's. The Duke remonstrated and took the natural steps for a colonel in such a situation, but without effect, and always without any personal reflections on Lenox, but, on the contrary, with great personal civility towards him. When Lenox was fairly in possession, the Duke of York said to him that though he certainly disapproved of the measure by which he had come into the regiment as prejudicial to the service and offensive to himself as colonel, and had done what he thought his duty in opposing it, that yet he was very glad the thing had happened in the case of Mr. Lenox, whom, considering the thing merely in a *personal* view, he was very happy to have in his regiment. To this gentlemanlike and conciliatory speech Mr. Lenox answered that it was the King's pleasure he should be there, and that was enough for him. I mention this to show the sort of man. Some time after this, Lenox was abusing the Princes and talking offensive language about them and their friends in the presence of the Duke of York at D'Aubigné's Club, when St. Leger said that it was very odd he always chose to say these things to persons who could not resent them. Why don't you say them to some of us who can answer you? This was the substance. I don't know the terms or the strength of the language in which St. Leger expressed himself. To this Lenox made no answer, and took no notice of it. The Duke of York, it seems, said afterwards to somebody, I don't know who or on what occasion, that

Lenox had submitted to language which a gentleman ought not to bear. Lenox, hearing of this, went to the Duke of York on the parade and asked him whether he had not said so, desiring an explanation. The Duke of York acknowledged having said so, but said that was not a proper place for explanation on such a subject. After the parade he went to the orderly-room, and there Lenox renewed the subject in the presence of the officers of the regiment, requiring the Duke of York to inform him what the words were to which he alluded, and who had spoken them. The Duke of York refused to tell him either, because it would be pointing out a quarrel to him, and said there was no occasion for it as the words were spoken to Mr. Lenox himself, and he must therefore be as well acquainted with them as anybody. Lenox said this laid him under a great hardship, as he was not conscious of any language having been used which he ought to resent, and as the Duke of York refused to inform him of the person who had used it; adding that the Duke of York was his colonel and the King's son, which placed them on an unequal footing, and made it impossible for him to have satisfaction, as he might in another case. The Duke desired that he would waive those circumstances, and consider him on this occasion exactly as he would any other gentleman. This Lenox declared he could not do, and so they parted. The next thing Lenox did was to write a circular letter to all the members of the Club, desiring them to inform him if they had heard any language which he ought to resent. You will see

it in the papers. He received no satisfaction from this measure. As he had heard it himself, nobody thought themselves bound to tell him what he *ought* to resent. Some of the answers were in a taunting and insulting style. St. Leger's was in substance that he kept no account of Club conversation, but that if he had said anything to Mr. Lenox which he wished for satisfaction for, he was ready at all times to give it him. After receiving these unsatisfactory answers, Lenox sent a challenge to the Duke of York by Lord Winchelsea; and you saw the result in the papers. The Duke of York had a very narrow escape; and Mr. Lenox had so much an intention to kill him, that Lord Winchelsea's carriage, with post-horses, trunks, and imperials, was in waiting at hand during the duel. To this account I shall add, that Jack Payne told me yesterday of the manner in which the business was received by the King and Queen. Observe, in the first place, that the second who carried the challenge, and went out with Lenox, is a Lord of the King's Bedchamber, son of Lady Charlotte Finch, who is in the Queen's family. While the duel was going on, the Prince of Wales was walking about in the yard at Carlton House, in great agitation. The Duke of York brought the account himself, and only said, "Brother, it is all over, and all is quite well; but I have no time to tell you particulars, for I must go to the *tennis-court*." On which the Prince wished the tennis-court at the bottom of the sea, and made the Duke of York relate what had passed.

'As soon as he had learnt the particulars he set off for Kew with the Duke of Clarence, and sent up a message to the King by Colonel Goldsworthy, that he wished to speak to the King immediately for five minutes, and that he wished the King to be *alone.* Colonel Goldsworthy delivered the message to the King, who said, "Very well, very well; but *I want just to go up to the Queen first.*" The Prince was accordingly admitted to the King, *Queen*, and *Princesses.* He said he had something particular to say, and wished that the *Princesses* might not be present. They retired, and he then related to the King and Queen the previous circumstances which led to the duel, and turned about to the *Queen*, and said, "Madam, you know I acquainted you with these circumstances *a week ago*" (which he had done in the view of having the thing stopped by authority). The King said, "Ay, indeed! *I never heard a word of it before.*" The Prince then related what had passed in the duel, and when he mentioned the circumstance of the ball having passed through the curls, the King gave a shudder and made a little noise expressive of terror, which was the only mark of sensibility on the occasion which he ventured to show. The Queen heard it all with perfect composure, and without the slightest expression of feeling or agitation. She stood looking out at window; and when the Prince had told the story, the way in which she expressed her tenderness on the occasion was to say immediately that she understood it *was all the Duke of York's own fault*, and that, *according to her*

account of the matter, he had showed more anxiety to fight Mr. Lenox than Mr. Lenox had to fight him. The Prince of Wales on this answered that she must have been very much misinformed, and that if she considered the circumstances he was sure she must allow her account was extremely improbable, because if a man was very desirous of fighting another, it was not likely that he should refrain voluntarily from firing at him, and that nobody was very anxious to go out merely for the pleasure of being fired at himself.

'This interview ended without anything being said by the King or Queen, either of approbation of his conduct, or *joy* at his safety, or any other expression of feeling, or any notice of the Duke of York at all. The Duke of Clarence was not admitted. The day before yesterday the Duke of York went himself to the King and Queen. He saw the King first alone, who was excessively affected and showed the strongest marks of agitation and tenderness for him on this occasion; but what is remarkable is, that the door being ajar, and the Queen in the next room, the King stole gently to the door and *shut it to*, that he might not be seen or overheard in these expressions of natural affection. When the Queen came in she took no *notice at all* of the transaction, good or bad. Just like *Mr. Elliot* and my *speeches*, or the *Speakership*. All this will show you what a *step-mother* she is, and what a state of absolute subjection the King is in. He is not to be at the Birthday, and, in short, people seem reconciled to the total retreat of the King for whom they have all pre-

tended to be in such fits of love and loyalty. Charlotte has the *breeches*, but God forbid I should ever know it otherwise than by report. They now talk of his going to Weymouth. I went last night to the French Ambassador's ball, which was very magnificent and very pretty. The Queen and three Princesses were there. The Princesses danced and seemed very happy. The Queen sat at the end of the ball-room, and people went up to be spoken to—that is, those who wished, and I was not of the number. She had a table for herself and the Princesses, and in the same room another for her ladies. I supped in another room between Mrs. Scott and Lady Borlase Warren, who are both as unlike the Queen as possible. Lord Malmesbury and Harriet are not asked to the French or Spanish ambassador's balls, and are omitted, it is understood, *on purpose*.'

'June 2, 1789.

'I hear nothing particular of the King's health. He is just well enough to keep the name of King for himself, and the authority of it for others. He is himself totally in the basket as to real business, and is driven without mercy by the Queen. Her conduct on the *duel* has been quite indefensible. I have had the whole story from the Prince of Wales, which I have not time to relate at present. The account I had from Jack Payne, which I sent you, is pretty right. She has never yet said once that she was glad the Duke of York was not killed; not once so much as that. When the Duke of York went to the King the first time after

the duel, I told you of the King having behaved with great feeling and affection. The Queen, on the contrary, did not say *one word to him on the subject;* and the first and only thing she said was, "Did you think Boodle's ball full last night?" At the French Ambassador's ball she not only received Mr. Lenox very graciously, but afterwards, when there was no occasion for it, kissed her fan to him half the length of the room two or three times, taking pains to mark her favour as conspicuously as she could.

'Since this the King has been made to write a most harsh and unnatural letter to the Duke of Clarence on the subject of the allowance or establishment which is to be made for him; in which, besides many cruel things to himself, he abuses him for associating with his brothers, and charges them in plain terms with unkindness and misconduct during his illness. I was called on Sunday to Carlton House on this subject, together with Burke and Sheridan, and passed some hours there on that business, drawing an answer from the Duke of Clarence to the King. The Duke of Clarence was there all the time, and I have taken a great liking to him. He is frank, sincere, spirited, honourable, excessively attached to his brothers, zealous to the greatest degree in their cause, willing to make any sacrifice to it; and, besides this, affectionate for the King, whom they all love sincerely, being convinced that he loves them, and wishes to do well if he had the power. The Duke of Clarence seems to have a good understanding, and expresses himself very clearly,

though naturally and bluntly, and not without a little ornamental swearing. This letter of the King's, together with the other circumstances of the times, leaves the Princes no choice, and *obliges* them to do now what they have long sought an opportunity for—to give to the King, and after him to the country—an account of their conduct on the occasion of his illness. This work is committed to me, and I am now in the midst of it, and must not lose a moment till it is done. I was last night at the Duke of Clarence's ball, where I stayed but a couple of hours, and came home before supper that I might get up this morning to work. God bless you!'

'Park Street: Saturday, June 6, 1789.

'You will be surprised to hear (as I was yesterday) that I am to have another battle for the Speakership, and, I presume, with equal success as before. Grenville is made Secretary of State in the room of Lord Sydney. Mr. Addington, brother of my opponent at Berwick, is to be proposed Speaker by Pitt—and I am to be started once more in opposition to him. Pitt could not have made a more obnoxious choice than this one. This is Addington's first Parliament. He is son of Lord Chatham's physician, and is in fact a sort of dependant to the family. The chair has hitherto been filled by persons of quite a different description, either eminent for abilities, experience, or rank, or of independent situations and characters.

'Pitt's friends allow that Addington is a very improper person for this office, and it has given great

offence: but I do not believe this will make much difference to the event. The election will be on Monday next. They have had great advantage in keeping the secret, for they will have brought their friends to town, and a great many of ours are out of reach. There are many changes in government. . . .

'You will see an account of Mr. Lenox dancing at St. James's, and the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Clarence refusing to dance with him, in the "Morning Herald," which is nearly the truth. When the Prince of Wales came to him he stopped short; and when the Princess-Royal was going to turn Mr. Lenox, the Prince of Wales, who danced with her, took hold of her hand, and led her down to the bottom of the dance. The Duke of York danced on. The Duke of Clarence did exactly as the Prince of Wales had done. The Prince went up to the Queen after the dance. She said to him that she supposed he was tired. He answered, "Not at all." She then said she supposed he found it too hot. He said that in such company it was impossible but to find it too hot. On which the Queen said, "I suppose you mean that I should break up the ball." The Prince answered, "that he thought it the best thing she could do;" and she did so accordingly.'

'Park Street: Tuesday, June 9, 1789.

'The division yesterday was 215 for Addington, to 174 against him. The former division, when Grenville was chosen, was 215 to 144. . . . The debate was of the most distressing nature possible—turning entirely

on a discussion of personal merits. But, bating the uneasiness with which one always sits under such an operation, it was as flattering and as completely gratifying to me as it could possibly be. The speeches, both of Fox and Burke, were quite enough to set any man up in reputation with the world and in self-satisfaction for life. . . . As to this event, it certainly is no disappointment, because we never had the most remote idea of success, and all the purposes were fully answered. . . . The King is gone in person to the House of Lords, to approve of the Speaker; he is doing so at this very instant, and I should have gone to see him if I had not been prevented from writing to you in the morning. This is the first time he has been at the House of Lords, or done any public act of royalty, since his illness, and the nature of the business requires only that he should walk into the House of Lords, sit down, and walk out again. He has not one word to say, nor anything whatever to do. The Chancellor speaks for him. This business of the Speakership has been an interruption to my work which I mentioned to you that I was employed in by the Prince of Wales. But I have already resumed it, and have not only been working at it this morning, but have been with Burke and the Duke of York, and have read to him what I have done, and was very glad to find him highly pleased and delighted with it. I should have read it also to the Prince of Wales, but he was preparing to go in state to the House of Lords when I went to Carlton House. The three Princes were in the House of Commons

yesterday during the Speakership business. The Duke of York told me to-day that when he saw the Queen the day before yesterday she did nothing but talk of Lord Winchelsea, and inquire about him, and what he was doing. This was addressed to Lady Charlotte Finch, but was certainly meant as an agreeable subject to the Duke of York, who joined, however, in the conversation as if nothing had happened.

'Harriet's ball was, as she says, very pretty and pleasant; it began with children of all ages, and concluded with fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts. Tom Sheridan seemed the ringleader of the boys.

'I have heard to-day of your actual departure for Gillsland.'

'Park Street: Saturday, June 13, 1789.

'There is nothing very new or interesting here. The King was thought to look well at the House of Lords the other day. The Archbishop of Canterbury complimented him on seeing him there, and on his looking so well; but the King told him he would never see him there again. To which the Archbishop said, "I suppose your Majesty means not *this session*." I do not know what the King's answer was, but I believe he meant that he should never be well enough to come there again at all. Something of the same sort passed with the Duke of York the day after. The Duke of York expressed his satisfaction with the King's good looks, and told him that everybody had been struck with it in the House of Lords. The King said, "What does all that signify when I feel myself that I

am very ill?" He complains of great weakness, and of his weakness increasing. Soon after his illness he could walk ten miles without being tired, and now he is overcome by the smallest degree of exercise. He says that riding agitates his nerves so much that he shall leave it off. Whether all this is good or bad after his disorder I do not know. His conduct with the Princes is very contradictory. One day he does and says everything that is harsh and severe; the next day he is affectionate and tender to the greatest degree. I believe I told you of his kind reception of the Duke of York after his duel, yet he wrote his harsh letter to the Duke of Clarence immediately after; and now he has written another letter to the Duke of Clarence, in reply to his answer, full of goodness and affection, and has expressed also great indulgence and love for the Duke of York. The fact, I believe, is, that his weakness obliges him to yield to the Queen and her faction in doing the harsh things they require; and, when he finds an opportunity, he indulges his own disposition of kindness towards his children. . . .

'Last night we were all at a masquerade at Hammersmith, given by Mrs. Sturt. You were invited. It is the house that was Lord Melcombe's, and is an excellent one for such occasions. I went with Lady Palmerston and Mrs. Crewe, Windham and Tom Pelham. We did not get home till almost six this morning. I was very tired of it, being chained to Mrs. Crewe, who is become a most wearing companion

to me. She is so extremely communicative of her own secrets and of other people's, that if one had much curiosity it would be worth while to be bored for an evening or two to hear her budget; but the price is too heavy. The sort of things she insists on telling of herself, of all her acquaintance, would make you stare, and I am not breaking her confidence in telling you this, for she says she has no objection at all to my repeating to you everything she would tell me.

'The Princes were all three at Mrs. Sturt's in *Highland dresses*, and looked very well. Their knees were bare, and I saw the Prince of Wales make a lady feel his bare knee. She had asked him something about that part of the dress, and he said it was exactly right, and she should see it was. "There," said he, "you may squeeze it if you like," which she did accordingly. They had breeches, however, above, and only rolled up the breeches' knees.

'Jack Payne was dressed as a young lady, and looked quite remarkably well, so well as hardly to be a joke, and infinitely better than in his own character. He was chaperoned by Mrs. Fitzherbert. Douglas's affair with Miss North seems still in suspense, but is expected to take place. He seems to be passing the interval, however, as agreeably as he can by an intimacy with Lady Margaret Fordyce, who, though somewhat faded, still retains much beauty and great powers of pleasing.'

'Tuesday, June 16, 1789.

'I am at present in high favour with all the Princes. was yesterday by appointment at Carlton House, and

passed the best part of an hour alone with the Prince. The occasion of my visit was to talk over the memorial which I am writing, and to read to him what I have already done. I read to him the introductory letter to the King, and he was excessively pleased with it, expressing every now and then his approbation in a very warm and agreeable way. He made at the same time several very sensible observations, and suggested some alterations which I think perfectly judicious, and shall certainly adopt. I was very much struck with the appearance of judgment, as well as with the signs of good disposition and proper feeling, which he gave in this interview, and I will venture to say that few princes have had anything like the good or considerable qualities which both the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York possess. You will suppose me, however, not quite an impartial judge, as his manner and language to me was that of the greatest kindness and cordiality.[1]

[1] 'C'est le plus grand roi du monde,' exclaimed Madame de Sévigné, after Louis XIV. had danced with her, but his claims to greatness, though enhanced in her eyes by the action, were not limited to it. So with the Prince of Wales. The charming manners which threw a glamour over the utter worthlessness of his moral character were combined with considerable talents and acquirements, and could hardly have existed without them, for perfect good-breeding would seem to be either the result of a combination of superior moral qualities, which we know the Prince had *not*, or of certain mental qualities—such as quickness of perception, readiness, and tact—and these he appears to have possessed in no ordinary degree. The tendency of the present day is rather to under-estimate the abilities of George IV., receiving its impulse probably from Thackeray's lecture, which, nevertheless, has been pronounced by many of those who had lived in intimacy with the King as giving a very inaccurate portrait of him. Admitting fully the selfishness, untruthfulness, and thoroughly vicious character of the man, they assert

Burke, who is always friendship itself, has urged me as much as he could to cultivate the Prince of Wales, and to acquire his confidence and familiarity; and he says, in his way, that he considers it as the Prince's best chance one day or other of getting into a good train of conduct, and avoiding many dangers and misfortunes which the want of some such friend may expose him to. After making all due allowance for the partiality of Burke, and the sanguine nature of his character, there remains enough in these opinions of his to gratify *me*, and therefore *you*. The King is going in a few days on a tour to the west. He goes first to Lyndhurst for a few days, and thence I believe to Weymouth. Cheltenham, I hear, is quite deserted this year, and is literally undone by its great fortune last year. . . . The Queen is working as hard as she can to form a party and increase the number of her adherents, in which she has two objects—one to retain possession of the King, and virtually of his authority, while he continues in his present condition—that is to say, while he is nominally at the head of government, but in fact

that he was endowed by nature with abilities which had not been uncultivated, and that without them he could not have borne the part he did in the society of the leading men of his day. Sir Walter Scott remarked that it was impossible to form a fair judgment of the abilities of the man who introduced whatever subject he chose, discussed it just as long as he chose, and dismissed it when he chose; but the remark is only just if abilities of a high order are meant. To do the three things well which Scott enumerated would require, in the society of the men the Prince lived with, no small amount of general information, perception, and observation, combined with the good-breeding which led Scott to pronounce the Prince the finest gentleman he had ever seen.

unable or unwilling to exercise his powers himself; the other to provide means for acquiring either the Regency or as great a share of power as she can get if the King should again be obliged or should choose to retire from public affairs. All her friends as well as herself are canvassing like candidates and agents before an election. One of their objects is Mrs. Legge, and you would be surprised, or, at least, I have been so, for I think your faith in Mrs. Legge was never great, to see how easily this prodigy of strength and understanding is won. The Queen has got people to tell her that twenty years' absence have not effaced the impression which the pleasure of her company at Court had given her, and that one of the things she thought of with pleasure was the prospect which Mrs. Legge's recovery gave of enjoying this satisfaction again. In the meanwhile Mrs. Harcourt and the Digbys and the Bagots and Dartmouths all ply her with courtship and flattery. I do not know what renders this conquest so considerable in their eyes. Perhaps they think that, as Mrs. Legge is the centre of a constant and numerous society, she may be more useful than many others in collecting friends and drawing proselytes. Whatever their view is, it is quite entertaining to see how easily this giant has fallen before them. The Queen's speech, which I have told you, vanquished her at one blow, and it is good fun to see her distress between her new courtliness and loyalty and her old opinions and friends. She has twice put herself in the Queen's way with a *bandeau* of "*God save the King!*" *in her cap*, which is considered in a great

measure as a profession of party, and in one of her gravity and former manners, as well as actions, is quite a thing to laugh at. Windham and I called on her lately in the evening, and found that she had a very bad headache, and was refused to everybody except three or four on a small list. However, the servant would have us go up, and we found her alone with Mr. Cholmondeley. A few minutes after we were admitted the servant came up and said Mrs. Harcourt was at the door, and desired to see her only for a single minute. There was an evident confusion in our party; Mrs. Legge seemed distressed what to do with us, and not to like being caught with such *rebels* in such *privacy*. But I made the matter easy by swearing that I could not stay in the room if Mrs. Harcourt came in, because I knew she did not like such company. Windham and I were accordingly shoved into another room, like lovers in a play when the husband comes home unexpectedly, and there we remained laughing at poor Mrs. Legge, though not above our breaths for fear of blowing up the plot. When Mrs. Harcourt retired, Mrs. Legge came creeping in and released us. I found that Mrs. Harcourt's business was to settle Mrs. Legge's visit to *St. Leonard's* at some time when there should be nobody else, and they should have her all to themselves, and, moreover, that the Queen was desirous of taking this opportunity of renewing her acquaintance with Mrs. Legge. This, you see, was quite irresistible, and I reckon Mrs. Legge, in spite of all her twenty years' philosophy and her love for

Windham, gone the *way of all flesh*, and like other frail women fallen at the first summons of flattery.'

'Park Street: Wednesday, June 17, 1789.

'I sent you a letter yesterday from Sheen, where I slept the night before, and dined at the Palmerstons' with a large party. The weather is extremely pleasant, and I find even that distance from London so refreshing, that I have gone there as frequently as I could of late, having three houses open to me; the Palmerstons, Culverdens, and Francises, besides Adam's in Richmond Park, within a half of a mile. . . . I wrote to you yesterday under a great horse-chestnut tree in Culverden's garden; the hay was making all round me, and the sun very bright, though I was perfectly sheltered. Everything is sweetness itself, even within eight miles of London; and I enjoy these occasional *grazings* extremely, although you despise our cockney ruralities among your glens and burns and cascades and woody banks. But Sheen and Richmond Park are both more rustic than Westminster Hall or Petty France. The life at Sheen is certainly not over rural, being very *junkety*, but that cannot be avoided in Surrey or Middlesex, much less in any place inhabited by the Palmerstons or any of their family. The hay is mostly got in hereabouts.

'I received another letter from you on Wednesday, and am now convinced that you are fallen desperately in love, for Gillsland has become suddenly quite a Garden of Eden, and I know no way of improving a country so

quickly except that which makes *empty* operas *full*, and dull assemblies *charming*.[1]

'Lord William Russell is going to be married to Lord Jersey's eldest daughter, Lady Charlotte Villiers. I find that Lord Titchfield was violently in love with her, and is gone abroad, I believe, on her account. She is supposed to have preferred Lord William, and I believe the Duke of Portland was not desirous of Lord Titchfield's marrying so immediately. Lady Charlotte Villiers is extremely pretty, and will be like her mother. Lord Carlisle's daughter, Lady Caroline Howard, who is also beautiful, is just going to be married, but, somehow or other, I totally forget to whom, though I must have heard it fifty times within this week.'[2]

'Park Street: Wednesday, June 24, 1789.

'I have this moment at length finished the Princes' memorial, but I am half distracted with it, for I have been working the two last hours almost incessantly. . . . Instead of being ready at two, as I promised the Prince yesterday, it was five before I got out of this house.

[1] Lady Elliot had gone a short time before with her children to Gillsland, a small watering-place on the English border, which at first sight had not impressed her favourably, but had improved on better acquaintance. To this communication she replied:—

'Gillsland: 1789.

'I think the greatest conquest I have made was a stocking-maker from Yorkshire, who assured me when he went away that he should often think of me, *at least three times a week* when he gets the newspaper, and should never see your name in it without thinking of Sir Gilbert's lady.'

[2] She married John Campbell, Esq. of Cawdor, elevated to the peerage in 1796 by the title of Earl of Cawdor.

When I arrived at Carlton House, I found the Prince was gone out, and I have since learnt that on a consultation with Lord Loughborough, and one or two more, he has been advised to delay it for some days. The King goes on his tour to-morrow, so that, if it is delivered to him at all, it must be carried to him in the country.'

'Danesfield: Friday, June 26, 1789.

'. . . The last time I wrote to you, which was on Wednesday, I was half crazy with hurry, hard work, and anxiety. All that is now over, and my business is completed very much to my own satisfaction, although it seems doubtful whether it will prove useful to anyone else. I told you that on Wednesday the Prince was advised by Lord Loughborough not to deliver this paper at this particular time; that is to say, just on the eve of the King's setting out on a journey of relaxation, and when his spirits are understood to be low. Yesterday the Prince desired a meeting at Carlton House on the subject. It was attended by the Duke of Portland, Charles Fox, Lord Loughborough, Burke, the Duke of Clarence, and the Prince himself. In this company I was obliged to read the whole of my work, and although the operation was not a pleasant one, yet the reception it met with was as gratifying as possible. . . . It consists of two parts. The first is a letter from the Prince to the King, intended as an introduction for the second paper, which is a memorial, also from the Prince to the King, containing an account and justification of his and the Duke of York's conduct during the King's illness. . . .

'The Duke of Portland and Lord Loughborough were decidedly against the introductory letter. Their reasons were, that it was a declaration of open war against the Queen; and that the attack was so serious that it could not be passed by, but laid the King under the *necessity* of judging between them—that in the present state of things, there could be no doubt of his deciding for her, and that the necessary consequence must be that the Prince would be forbid the Court, as well as his brothers, and all who should adhere to them—which they thought very disadvantageous to the Prince's interests. They had not the same objection to the memorial. But I have not a moment to finish the account, and must conclude in a word by saying that the result of the deliberation was for the Prince to write a short letter to the King, expressing his uneasiness under the charge of unkindness brought against him by the King, and that he had prepared a complete account of his conduct; but that his determination not to risk disturbing the King at an improper moment had prevented him presenting it till a better opportunity, unless the King should allow him to deliver it now. This is a sort of half-measure that will probably end in nothing. Both the Prince and the Duke of Clarence were eager for doing the business now, so was Burke—Fox doubted. I cannot say a word more.

'I went home after this council with the Duke of Portland to dinner. Burke was the only other guest, and we found Lord Titchfield just arrived from Paris.'

'July 1.

'You will have seen Lady Middleton's death in the papers. Everybody pities her and Mr. Mundy extremely. Hers is a very sad case; she was only just beginning to know what happiness was, with a husband she cared for and a child. . . . Douglas told me yesterday of his marriage being settled with Miss North. Both seem excessively happy. He is a little conscious about her ugliness, and when he told me of the match said there were but two things wanting, both of which are considered as inducements for other marriages—money and beauty; and, talking of the last of these defects, he said that he did not consider beauty as essential, and that after a time it would become indifferent. He hears the praises of her wit, understanding, and goodness with evident pleasure. All the men and all the women I have spoken to seem to think it a wonderful match.'

'Park Street: Thursday, July 9, 1789.

'I am glad you think so well of Douglas's match. I told him in general what you have said of it, and he seems not only much pleased, but very grateful for it. . . . Mr. Legge the other day inquired of me about Douglas's *family*, and I soon discovered that he had been employed by *Lord North* to learn what he could about it. I was *really* unable to give him any satisfaction about it, and I told him fairly that in any conversation of this sort I was so much connected with Douglas by friendship and affection, that I could hardly be

talked to as a third party or indifferent person. I found that Lord North had remarked it as singular that nobody had ever heard him, even by accident, allude to his father or mother, and had said that Lord Guilford was an old-fashioned man, and might think it odd, when his granddaughter was going to be married, that none of her family should know anything at all about her husband's family. Legge did not talk as if Lord North felt much on this subject himself, or as if it would create any difficulty in concluding the match, but only as if they had naturally a desire to be informed on the subject. . . . I never felt any curiosity, or even thought of inquiring about his origin; we are always used, especially in professions like the law, to live with people as we find them, and without thinking whence they came. I told Legge, however, that although I had no positive knowledge on the subject, yet I had always understood that he was a gentleman in his birth, though certainly not of any considerable origin in point of fortune—which was a case extremely common in Scotland, as well as usual enough in all other countries; that in the meanwhile he is certainly as good a gentleman now as if he were of the oldest family in England, for his education, his manners, his profession, and his success in it, with the income he enjoyed, were as good titles to be placed in the rank of gentlemen as many of the most eminent men in the kingdom could show. And I mentioned Lord ——, Lord ——, Lord ——, I believe, and several other great men, whose *family* would not stand much inquiry about, but who are en-

nobled by that profession which in this country does unquestionably confer the rank of gentlemen on its members. . . . There is no news of consequence. The King has carried on an affectionate correspondence with the Prince of Wales concerning the Duke of York's health since his illness.'

'Park Street: Tuesday, July 14, 1789.

'On Friday Windham and I were engaged to another junket from Sheen. The party was to see Lord Loughborough's place near Weybridge, and Oatlands, the Duke of York's. . . .

'We shall be left pretty much to ourselves in Park Street, as the Palmerstons will not be there next winter. They are going abroad in September to pass the winter. . . . I cannot help envying them a little, for I have long thought Italy a country that it is absolutely necessary to see before one takes the *long journey*, or makes the grand tour of all.

'I am going to-day on another junket with the Palmerstons—on the water to see the annual sailing-match for the Duke of Cumberland's cup.'

'Thursday, July 16, 1789.

'I write this line at Sir Joshua Reynolds', where I am come to dine from the House of Commons with Burke, Windham, Courtenay, Dr. Lawrence, and some others. The picture of Cholmondeley in the room where I am writing is the finest I ever saw; it is perfectly like, but he is not really so handsome as his

picture. There is also an excellent one of Lady Beauchamp, just done. Harriet talks of going abroad with the Beauchamps or Palmerstons, Lord Herbert is going immediately to Scotland to his regiment, and will be at Minto, but I don't know exactly when, perhaps before me; I need not tell you to make much of him.'

'Park Street: July 23, 1789.

'I am really and certainly off to-morrow morning. I went to the Duke of Clarence immediately after I had written the line you received last, and he told me that the Prince was to be in town next morning. This was very good news. He came to town accordingly, and I delivered to him in person my whole crop of papers, which was not a small one. He was very flattering and very kind in his expressions on the occasion; but I had less time than I wished to talk the business over with him, and I fear that either no use will be made of my labours, or a bad one, for he talked of giving the papers to the *Chancellor*, that he might deliver them to the King whenever a fit opportunity should be found, etc. etc. This is a very bad scheme, and I presume his friends will advise him better. . . . The Prince and Duke of York returned to Brighthelmstone yesterday in the evening. The Prince said he should go to Weymouth immediately, *but I doubt.* He certainly ought to do it.'

Sir Gilbert was delayed in London a day or two longer than he expected, and before he left it he heard

from Lady Elliot that a violent storm had temporarily spoilt the beauty of the home to which he was hastening.

The tempest was of so violent a nature, and so unusually disastrous in its effects, that the account of it seems to be worth preserving, though its interest will be slight to all beyond the precincts of Minto.

'Minto: Friday, July 24, 1789.

'I have been sitting some time looking at the paper without knowing how to set about telling you the devastations that have happened at Minto. I was in the midst of a letter to you on Tuesday, when the most violent storm of thunder, lightning, hail, and rain came on, that I believe ever happened in this island; it began soon after eleven, and lasted above four hours without intermission. The hailstones were as big as the ends of my fingers, and united after they fell into large solid pieces of ice, though the day was extremely hot and oppressive. The lightning poured in at every window, and the noise of the thunder was even outdone by that of the water, which came pouring in through the bottom of the house till it was several feet deep in water. It rushed though the stone hall like a strong run; the rents of doors and windows not being enough to let it off, it was soon several feet deep. . . . We were obliged to break a hole in the wall to save the offices from being carried away.

'The water flowed over all the bridges. The pond was full six feet above its banks, and fell over the

whole width of the glen. I stood trembling and watching the Pond Head from the library-window, which held miraculously above two hours, and then gave way; the first crash carried away the poplar-tree on the bank-side, and quantities of trees through the whole glen. The water filled up the bottom totally, and was there twelve feet high, and some very large trees are now lying in the fields, and some were seen swimming by Chesters. Every walk is torn to pieces; the kitchen-garden and the hothouse were full of water. . . . Poor George was excessively frightened, and kept crying and asking when the house would go. Gilbert and Annie were too busy to be afraid. The cook was in fits, and I kept my head perfectly till the Pond Head went, and then I heard an alarm that a man I had set near it to watch any timber which was floating in the pond from striking or hurting the Head, was certainly killed; I then felt more than I can describe, but the man has come to the house and told us of his escape. . . . All my improvements are gone—walls, fences, hedges, water-gates, and everything; and the burn has changed its course.'

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN, at the close of the session of 1789, Sir Gilbert Elliot returned to Minto, an early dissolution of Parliament was generally anticipated.[1] Having determined not to offer himself again as a candidate for Berwick, he had, in preparation for the expected elections, taken steps to secure himself a seat elsewhere. Various negotiations for this object had, however, failed, and, as Sir Gilbert wrote to his wife shortly before the close of the session of 1789, such was the unpopularity of the Opposition and the power of Pitt, that at no time could a member of the Whig party have greater difficulty in finding a seat. He was therefore much gratified on learning from the Duke of Portland that he might rely on a seat being found for him—his talents and services being such as could not easily be spared by his party. With this assurance he went down to Minto; but, after some months of leisure there, which gave him an opportunity of looking into his affairs, his views of his own position underwent a complete change. Though well aware that by nature, taste, and habits, he was strongly drawn to a political

[1] It did not take place till the autumn of the following year, 1790.

career, he felt, nevertheless, that in the existing circumstances of his party he could not pursue it without sacrifices that he thought it his duty to his family not to incur. He found that he had not sufficient fortune to enable him to live *with his family* between London and Minto without risking an amount of expenditure which might eventually impoverish his children, and must necessarily disturb his own mind with anxieties and cares. On the other hand, to continue the life he had been leading for the last two years—of separation from his family during the Parliamentary session—was to resign all domestic comfort, which to his affectionate nature was no common trial. And, moreover, his affairs and property in Scotland could not but suffer from the long-continued deprivation of his superintendence and control. The extreme slowness of communication between England and Scotland in those days gave great additional weight to the above considerations. The journey from London to Minto, which now takes eleven hours in a comfortable railway-carriage, then occupied no less than fifty-four hours in a post-chaise, and, thus performed, was so fatiguing that, except under circumstances when haste became a duty, few travellers ever thought of coming '*through*,' but took at least two nights of rest by the way. No hasty flights during the Easter holidays or Whitsuntide recess were dreamt of, or, if they were, the dreamer was liable to such a mischance as befell Sir Gilbert when, on the eve of starting to spend ten days at Easter with his family, a heavy snow-storm made all

the roads so bad that he remained perforce in London, as, after deducting the time necessary for two journeys thus unexpectedly lengthened, only two or three days could have been spent in the anticipated rest of home. The country posts were so irregular that letters were occasionally a couple of days between Minto and Carlisle ;[1] 'when the roads are heavy we cannot expect,' he writes, 'that the cross-country posts should not be after time;' and every page of this correspondence bears witness to the fact that in the enforced separation of the husband and wife constant letters were a necessary condition of their comfort. Every detail of the children's studies and pleasures, every detail of the management of family and house, and farm and place, were equally communicated to him; and however busily occupied such letters might find him, Sir Gilbert had always time not only to return information of his own proceedings, but also to enter into every subject which interested those who wrote to him, and his considerate and kindly nature breathes in every line. At one time he is informed that a pair of old and trusted dependents have been found utterly unworthy of confidence, and that summary dismissal is the only possible punishment for a course of long-continued pilfering. 'Remove them at once from a place of trust,' he replies; 'but don't send them away till you have ascertained that they will have something to live on elsewhere, or the punishment would be greater than the offence.' At another time, in reply to some warm

[1] Less than fifty miles.

praises of a new and young factor lately engaged to succeed one superannuated, he writes, 'I am glad the new broom is likely to succeed so well. I should be sorry, however, that any reflections on the *ancien régime* should come round to the *ex-minister* and molest his retirement.' One of the gravest cases referred to him for judgment was a difference of opinion between Lady Elliot and her son's tutor, which arose in his having struck one of the boys repeatedly in a fit of anger. Sir Gilbert's letter in reply to his wife's is a model of judicious kindness and good sense. 'As Mr. H.,' he writes, 'will naturally suppose that you have mentioned to me what passed between him and Gilbert, he may probably be anxious to know my sentiments, and I should wish to remove as early as possible any apprehension he may entertain of the impression he may suppose either the natural feeling of parents or the circumstances of the case likely to make on my mind to his disadvantage. My high opinion of him and my confidence in him remain unchanged. It is not the circumstance of his having punished Gilbert that I blame in this instance, but the *manner* in which it was done. I have always leant strongly against corporal punishment in education, but in a public school the number of boys makes these short methods indispensable; and the frequency of such punishment removes some of its evils, for there is not the same chance of its breaking or lowering the natural pride or spirit which ought to be preserved when it is considered a thing quite of course, and when it is common to all

without exception. I do not believe it is *necessary* in private education, and, if not necessary, I hardly think it admissible. Above all, any punishment, this one especially, should be entirely free from the least appearance of passion or anger in him who inflicts it, and should be clearly felt by the boy as an act of mere justice, or simply inflicted on him for some good purpose by one who is unwilling to do it. It is in this respect that Mr. H. erred, and the manner in which the transaction passed shows that it was rather a sudden flight of temper (though probably occasioned by a natural provocation) than a sober and deliberate correction.

'I daresay that Mr. H. will agree with me in this view of the transaction, and I hope that he will not think too seriously of the sort and degree of disapprobation I have expressed concerning it. I am quite convinced of the severe trials to which the patience and the tempers of those who conduct the education of boys are exposed, even where the dispositions of their pupils are the best; and it would be a great want of indulgence on my part if I did not make allowance for a single instance of the want of that self-command so rare in other walks of life, and for which Mr. H.'s state of health is sufficient to account.' The tutor shortly afterwards became insane and had to be removed from Minto. While the education of the boys occupied Sir Gilbert's closest attention, their pleasures were no less near to his heart. Interspersed among his other letters, he had preserved specimens of the handwriting of both boys—

little notes in round text containing orders for fireworks, news of a pony, locks of a favourite dog's hair, and sometimes only a few words of loving reproach for his long absence. 'Why do you not come, papa? you always say you are coming, and never come.'

To form a complete idea of the whole nature of the man, whose spirit was at once 'clear and sweet,'[1] it would only be necessary to give *in extenso* the letters from which these selections have been made; but enough has been said to show that the half-yearly absence of the head of the family was both painful and inconvenient, and to prevent any surprise being felt by his determination, formed during the summer of 1789, to adopt the only alternative open to him—namely, retirement from public life for a time (two years was the period he thought of), during which, as he had good reason to hope, the condition of his private affairs would so far improve as to justify him in resuming political life under easier circumstances.

Having arrived at this conclusion, he felt himself bound in honour to impart it to the Duke of Portland, and to resign his claims on the seat promised him by the Duke.

In reply to Sir Gilbert's letter the Duke urged him strongly to reconsider his views, and at all events not to decide without previous and personal consultation with other friends. Sir Gilbert's account of his interview with the Duke when he went up to London in

[1] 'He was a man—
Yes, and a clear sweet spirit.'—*Philaster.*

1790[1] suffices to show the estimation in which he was held by his friends, and also explains the conditions under which it was finally decided that he should consent to come into the Parliament about to be elected. He was not, however, destined to be indebted to the party for his seat, as by the friendly intervention of Lord Malmesbury, who acted on this occasion in a spirit of frank and cordial kindness which won Sir Gilbert's warm gratitude, he was returned for Helstone in the spring of 1790.

The conditions under which he accepted the seat offered him were that he should not be required to attend regularly or constantly in his place, but while residing habitually in Scotland, should hold himself in readiness to be summoned up to London whenever it was judged necessary or advisable that he should act in Parliament with his party.

While at Minto Sir Gilbert kept up an active correspondence with various friends, from whose letters the two following are selected as carrying on the narrative of political transactions :—

The Right Hon. Thomas Pelham to Sir Gilbert Elliot.

'Stratton Street: August 21, 1789.

'My dear Elliot,—Having put off writing until the last moment, I am much more hurried than I could wish; I am actually on my way to Spa, having left Sussex yesterday, and intending to go by the mail-coach this evening to Dover. I was detained longer than I

[1] Letter to Lady Elliot.

intended by the *fêtes* that have been given in honour of the Prince's and Duke of York's birthdays; they were very brilliant and very joyful, and there were diversions for all ranks of people, both morning and evening.[1] The Princes have conducted themselves very well since they have *been with us*, and gain upon all those that are with them. I wish we could persuade them to do something that might have a more general effect. A visit to Weymouth was intended at several different times, but as often prevented; the day after the Prince's birthday I really thought that they would have gone to Plymouth. The weather was very fine, and the three brothers seemed so pleased with being on board a packet to see a boat-race I had made on the occasion, that they determined to sail in her the next evening to Plymouth; however, they were dissuaded, and properly, for it was too much to risk three such lives in a common packet-boat; however, the Duke of York went by land, and carried a letter from the Prince making his excuse, and preparing the way for delivering the paper you drew up when a proper occasion shall offer. Fox and Sheridan are at Brighton, and I believe were both concerned in the letter. The Duke arrived at Saltram before the King's breakfast, and stayed till the King went to bed; he was most graciously received by both their Majesties, the Queen extremely civil to him. The King looks well, and is very cheerful, though he still complains of weakness and swelling in the legs; the Queen is grave, and very much altered in her behaviour.

[1] At Stanmer Park, near Brighton, possibly.

'All the ministers except the Chancellor went to Weymouth a day or two before the King left it, which occasioned some speculation; it is certain that the Chancellor disagrees with them, and it is believed that they did nothing with the King. A dissolution is still talked of, but not so generally credited as it was. Windham came to Brighton with Sir Joshua Reynolds; he stayed for the Prince's birthday, and then embarked for France. Fox has had a letter from him; he writes with all the spirit of one of the Tiers, and says there is no danger in travelling.

'Having executed your commands in sending you all the news from the south, I may be permitted, I hope, to make a few inquiries about the north. I hope to hear you are reconciled to your envied solitude of Minto, and that you bear the loss of Sheen with becoming patience. We shall do you all the mischief we can in your absence; you had better therefore court the cruel lady at Minto to persuade her to come to town with you next winter, etc. etc.—Ever most sincerely yours,

'Thomas Pelham.'

William Elliot of Wells to Sir Gilbert Elliot.

'Princes Court: February 23, 1790.

'My dear Sir Gilbert,—I now sit down to fulfil my promise of sending you some account of the late dissension between Burke and Sheridan in the debate on the military establishments, which has really made more noise and occasioned more conversation throughout

London than almost any event I can recollect. I confess I feel myself relieved from a considerable difficulty by having it in my power to send you Burke's speech, which was published this morning; for as I was not in the House during the debate, and only had the substance of it from Mr. Burke after it was over, I should have been apprehensive of misstating it to you. You will perceive by the perusal of the speech that Burke expressed in strong terms the detestation and horror with which he regards the proceedings of the democratical party in France, and he likewise mentioned the fear he entertained lest the same principles should gain a footing in this country and produce the same effects. The speech was, I understand, a very fine one, but I rather believe that it was in some respects unguarded.

'He paid many compliments to Fox in it, but he certainly dropped expressions which tended to impress the House with an idea that Fox was too apt to suffer himself to be guided by the counsel of persons who were unfit to advise him. Fox, however, rose immediately and made a speech as well calculated as possible to take off any wrong impression that Burke might have left on the House.

'In the conclusion of it he launched out into so earnest and sincere a panegyric upon Burke, that he was almost seen to weep. Sheridan then got up, and, after attacking the principles which Burke had avowed relative to the French Revolution, broke out into the most virulent personal invective against him, and asked "whether the honourable gentleman had found his doc-

trine amidst the stones of the Bastile, or had collected them from the baggage of Marshal Broglie?" In short, it is allowed by all quarters that it was as violent a philippic as he ever uttered against Pitt or Dundas, and was in every view injudicious and perfectly unjustifiable. Sheridan soon discovered he was in the wrong, and is said to have expressed some contrition for his conduct on the very evening the conversation passed. The next morning O'Brien was despatched to Burke in the capacity of mediator, and it was determined that Sheridan should go to Burke's the same night at ten o'clock. Burke, however, dined out, and not coming home precisely at the time appointed, he found Sheridan going away just as he reached Gerard Street. He then got into Sheridan's coach, and they went together to Burlington House. Burke, immediately upon stepping into the carriage, shook Sheridan by the hand, and told him that nothing remained to be done but to make the matter up in a manner that would appear best in the eyes of the public. However, in the course of the conversation in the carriage, Burke conceived that Sheridan was attempting to justify his conduct, and to show that he had some reason for his warmth and the language he had used. This entirely broke off the negotiation; and, though they stayed together for an hour and a half at the Duke of Portland's, they parted without coming to any sort of reconciliation.

'I know that Fox, who was present at the conference at Burlington House, thought that Burke broke off the

treaty too abruptly, and that Sheridan expressed great penitence, and was willing to make all the necessary concessions. Young Burke had a conversation the day following with Sheridan at the Duke of Portland's, but without effect; and I believe Pelham, who was there, thought young Burke rather *too hard* with him.

'Here the matter rests, nothing further having been attempted in the way of negotiation. It is not easy to ascertain what it was in Burke's speech that *really* gave such violent offence to Sheridan. He himself told Burke that he conceived there were some expressions in it that were aimed particularly at him. However, he certainly has assigned different reasons to different people, and one is therefore not disposed to place implicit confidence in any of them. He has asserted to some that his attachment to Fox was so great that he could not endure to hear anything which in the smallest degree implied a censure on his conduct. To others he has said that he was irritated by the principles which Burke had laid down with respect to the French Revolution, and which were so directly opposite to those he entertains himself upon the same subject. In short, feeling that the imprudence of his conduct has exposed him to the censure of the public, he has been induced to employ a little *artifice* in order to excuse himself. Burke declares that he made no allusion which Sheridan could possibly conceive to have been pointed at him; but really no man can be said to be capable of judging fairly of the impressions of *his own* speech, and I believe you will agree with me

in thinking that Burke is still less likely to do it than almost any other man.

'Sheridan was certainly observed to redden and change colour whilst Burke was speaking, which does give one some reason to imagine that he did take some expressions to himself. I know Burke's private opinion is that Sheridan had designed to have made some *popular* speech in favour of the French Revolution, and was therefore mortified and chagrined at being prevented by the principles which Burke threw out. When Sheridan's great eagerness and zeal for popularity is considered, this undoubtedly does not seem an improbable conjecture. I plainly perceive, by all the conversations I have had with Burke, that this affair must remain where it is. He says that he has no animosity against Sheridan, but that it is impossible their former friendship can be restored, even if a reconciliation were to take place. He has no objection to meeting Sheridan, and they have since dined together both at the Prince's and at the Duke of Portland's, but I believe they had no conversation of any sort. It would certainly be extremely desirable that the breach should be entirely made up; but if, on any future discussion of these principles in Parliament, it should appear to the public that the wound had only admitted of a temporary cure, and was likely to break out with fresh violence, the consequences would be then more essentially injurious to the party than if the business is permitted to continue in its present state. I have now related to you all I know, and I believe all

that has happened, upon this subject. I only wish you may be able to read what I have written, for I have been rather fearful of being too late for the post, and have consequently been obliged to make great haste. I saw Howden this morning, who tells me he is to sail this afternoon.

'I have always hitherto been ungracious enough to forget to thank you for your kindness in offering me the use of my old apartments in Park Street; however, as I propose going into the country in about ten days, I shall keep my lodgings till that time. When I return to town, which will be probably near the time of your coming up, I shall be much obliged to you if you will take me in.—Believe me, my dear Sir Gilbert, ever yours, 'W. E.'

'P.S.—The speech is published under Burke's direction.

'I have spoken to Windham to take care of you at the call of the House, but it may perhaps be better for him to have a letter to produce from you, stating you are detained in the country by ill-health or private business.

'The call stands at present for Monday next.'

In April Sir Gilbert returned to London, and resumed his correspondence with his wife.

Sir Gilbert to Lady Elliot.

'Park Street: April 22, 1790.

'I arrived here yesterday. . . . I have been at the trial, and the whole of the day has been employed in debates on evidence. . . . Elliot is with me. Nothing material has happened. I saw Harriet yesterday. Dined with the Palmerstons. In the evening saw Mrs. Gally. I have not yet seen Hugh,[1] nor been with the Duke of Portland. . . .'

'April 24.

'The first thing I have to say is that you may absolutely depend on my setting off between the 15th and 25th of May. . . . I passed the whole evening yesterday—that is from half after nine to almost one in the morning, with the Duke of Portland alone. We talked over, fully and confidentially, all that relates to the subject of our correspondence, and I have found in every word fresh reason for loving his kind and affectionate heart, and for revering the nobleness of his mind. It is needless to repeat the particulars of our conversation; but its whole tendency was to put my mind at rest, and to make me satisfied with myself, and to remove every notion of obligation to him. This is not like any man but himself that I have ever seen. He expressly approved of my resolution as proper and as necessary in the circumstances of my family. But *he* pressed on *me* the propriety of con-

[1] Hugh Elliot had been sent for by Mr. Pitt to undertake a secret mission to Paris.

tinuing in Parliament (*not of attendance*), and said repeatedly that he considered it as of importance to his cause and to our party that I should be in the House of Commons, whether I should ever attend or not, for two, three, or even four or five years to come. He said that he saw no difficulty, and that the only thing to be done was to make my *own mind* easy on the subject. I asked him whether I should open the matter to Mr. Fox, and he advised me to do it, telling me that of all men he was the most liberal and the most considerate of private interests and duties. I shall therefore explain my situation fully to Fox, Burke, Douglas, and Sir George.[1] . . . The Duke talked over very fully the present state of politics, and particularly the situation of the Princes. I find everybody a good deal dissatisfied with the Prince of Wales. In the first place, his affairs, as well as those of the Duke of York, are in the greatest distress. They had taken very uncreditable measures for relief, by soliciting loans in Holland and elsewhere, on usurious terms, and to be repaid at the King's death. This has failed, however, and I am glad to find the Duke of Portland is engaged in forming a plan for restoring the Prince's affairs and the Duke of York's to some order; but, as the plan must be executed by the Princes themselves, one cannot feel much confidence in its success. The Prince of Wales has got very much into the hands of Single-speech Hamilton, who, though a friend of yours, is the worst man alive. He is driving the

[1] Cornewall.

Prince to very bad steps for his own interest. I mean for Hamilton's interest; and besides he prevents the Prince from consulting and being advised by his real friends and those with whom he professes to be connected. I fear there is in the Prince this feature of his father, that he loves closets within cabinets, and cupboards within closets; that he will have secret advisers besides his ostensible ones, and still more invisible ones behind his secret advisers; that he will be faithful to none of them, and a most uncomfortable master to those ministers who would really serve him. However, there is no immediate prospect of anybody suffering the inconvenience of being his minister. The King is perfectly well, but is supposed not to do business. The Queen still has the sway. Some people doubt whether the King will consent to a dissolution at all. No reason is given for his dissent, but in point of fact it is thought he has never yet consented to it. *I* believe, however, that it will take place.

'I have passed a great deal of time with Burke, but he has so many and such copious subjects of conversation that I have not yet come to my own affairs. He related to me the whole affair of Sheridan, in which Sheridan is universally allowed to have been wrong originally, and the Duke of Portland says Burke was afterwards wrong in not favouring a reconciliation. Burke has a pamphlet just coming out on France, and the relation of that subject to England, which I passed the forenoon in reading yesterday, and I like it very much, and think it will do both us and the rest of the

world a great deal of good. All the Burkes are perfectly kind and affectionate, and I pass as much time with them as I can. Young Dick looks extremely ill, and I fear is so. The great topic at present is the man called the *Monster*, who goes about stabbing women. No less than fourteen women, some of whom are of fashion, have been attacked and wounded by him. Great rewards are offered for his apprehension; he is supposed to be mad, and to have received some injury from your sex, which he takes this method to revenge. He is said to succeed in clearing the streets of women much better than Sir W. Dolbden, who brought in a bill for that purpose last year. This man attacks all sorts, gentle and simple. Sir Sampson Wright says there are now 4,000 banditti about London that he knows of. They rob in the middle of the day at Charing Cross; Elliot has been robbed *twice*, and has lost, together with a good many guineas, a watch worth 30*l.* or 40*l.*[1] I dined yesterday at Lord Malmesbury's.

[1] Though Sir Gilbert describes the streets of London as at this date in a state of more than common lawlessness, they had, not very long before, offered no less remarkable experiences to passengers. When Lady Elliot was living in Park Street (the precise date is unknown to us, but at some time between 1782 and 1788) an attempt was made to rob her at midday in Grosvenor Square as she was returning from the drawing-room in a sedan chair. Taking advantage of a fog, her chairmen carried her to the part of the square nearest to the enclosure and furthest from the footway, where they set her down, as she believed, with the intention of robbing her of her jewels. Happily, however, for her, something occurred to alarm them, and they ran off, leaving her to wait in all her birthday finery till the occupants of a passing carriage discovered her situation and carried her home. But a still stranger adventure occurred to her on another occasion, when her carriage was standing at the door of one of the great London shops in a crowded

I like the house extremely well; they are excessively delighted with it, but I doubt the bargain is not very secure yet, and it will be a good price if he gets it secure at last—10,000*l*. . . . Hugh is come, and is just the same as ever.

'I have been at no public place, and not thought of any amusement whatever. Elliot and I have never been apart. The Exhibition is to open soon. I shall go to the Shakespeare Gallery and the other picture-places in a day or two. I saw Sir Joshua at Burke's. He is in tolerable spirits, and has one eye perfect. He can paint a little.'

'April 27, 1790.

'The quantity of French goods of all sorts, particularly ornamental furniture and jewels, has sunk the price of those things here. The price of diamonds is much fallen. . . . Cholmondeley is much talked of as going to marry Miss Forbes, the admiral's daughter, who is a fortune, but he denies it. . . . The *Monster* goes on cutting women; one was dreadfully cut across

thoroughfare. While her sister, who accompanied her, was speaking to a shopman at one window of the carriage, a gentleman, perfectly well-known to her as a member of society, rode up to the other at which she sat, and stooping towards her, but without a sign of recognition, or a deprecatory or explanatory word, snatched her purse from out the carriage-basket and rode off with it at full speed. Lady Elliot never saw it again. In after years she was wont to tell the story as an instance of the desperate courses to which the gambling mania of the day drove its victims, but not even to her children did she ever confide the name of the individual who had placed himself at her mercy and was saved by her silence from overwhelming disgrace.

the forehead the night before last in Pall Mall; one woman is dead of wounds he gave her.'

'Park Street: Monday, May 3, 1790.

'I have been doing an odd-sounding thing, but an agreeable one. Finding that the day is divided into so many small parts that I could not see anything to signify of the few friends whom I wish to be with as cordially as I can while I am here, I have carried my night-cap to Stanhope Street,[1] and have slept there two nights, and I mean to do so two nights more; by this means I am *domesticated* with them, and got acquainted with all the children. I shall do the same thing in Spring Gardens[2] and at Douglas's. Isabella[3] is in town at my brother's lodgings. She is grown, and improves in beauty. Hugh still says he shall bring her to Minto for two months, and that he shall be quite happy if he can but fish there all the summer. He does not appear sure of keeping his employment. Pitt is by no means on good terms with him. He has not seen him once yet on business. I think they want to squeeze him out of the line, and he may probably have his pension of 500*l.* a year, on which I am sure he could not live. He has certainly public merits and strong claims, although I fear there is a great disposition to use him ill. . . .

'All the Cornewalls are fine children, and very

[1] Sir G. Cornewall's. [2] Lord Malmesbury's.
[3] Hugh's daughter, afterwards Mrs. Payne.

pleasant. Anna Maria is much grown; Fanny is extremely nice.'[1]

'Park Street: May 6, 1790.

'I went yesterday to the levee, and am going to-day to the drawing-room. The King was civil enough, which is rather more than I expect to-day from the Queen. Everybody is full of the Spanish rupture, of which you will see in the newspapers nearly all I know. I trust we shall not be drawn into actual war, and the general opinion is that we shall not. Yet I cannot help fearing the first steps as likely enough, in all such cases, to lead us further than is either intended or foreseen. There seems no connection between the subject of our difference with Spain and the other troubles in Europe; but, on the other hand, as we have actually formed engagements with Prussia and Sweden, and as it was generally believed that the ministry intended to send a fleet to the Baltic, or had thoughts of it at least, I feel an apprehension that the Spanish business may furnish a pretext for an armament, which may be employed for other purposes when it is once prepared.'

'London: Saturday, May 8, 1790.

'I cannot tell you much more of the Spanish war than you will see in the papers. I fear the more general opinion is that the affair is not likely to terminate without hostilities. I am heartily sorry for it; war is not good for those who have either a great deal of money or a little—it is only desirable for those who have none.'

[1] Afterwards Lady Hereford.

'Russell Street: Saturday, May 15, 1790.

'These are my last words in town. . . . I have to tell you something of Lord Malmesbury, which entitles him to my warmest gratitude for the greatest kindness done in the handsomest way I ever received. It is to him I owe the seat[1] in Parliament; but I cannot add a line—we shall talk it all over soon.'

[1] The seat alluded to was for *Helstone*.

CHAPTER IX.

While Sir Gilbert was at Minto enjoying the charms of the country after his wont—approving of the plantations and fences which Lady Elliot loved to lay out and extend—playing with his boys by rock and river—or lounging for hours under the trees with an unread book in his hand;—his friends in the south were engaged in the strife of the general election.

Lady Palmerston wrote to him from Sheen on June 19:—

'Things go on but ill for our friends; unexpected oppositions are constantly starting up. Tooke's madness occasions a great deal of trouble; many think he keeps back at present, depending upon Charles Fox's fancied security, and then at last will whip in when it is too late for Fox to overtake him. Charles wishes his friends to poll early in order to be a thousand ahead. He was very ill received on the first day, and would have been worse treated if he had not retired into the Shakespeare. Horne has a great deal of money lying in his banker's hands. Sheridan has a violent contest to contend with at Stafford; however, he has the ladies on his side—for he was attended into

the town by four hundred, headed by a beautiful Miss Furnio. I heard yesterday of two weddings really to take place—Cholmondeley to Miss *John* Pitt, and Lord Dysart to Miss Anne Beauclerk, the maid of honour's sister. Cholmondeley deserves to be married, for he is indefatigable in his pursuit. Mrs. Sheridan dined here yesterday evening, and sang like an angel till two o'clock.'

Burke's pamphlet on the French Revolution appeared in October, and was sent by him to Sir Gilbert, with a note which opens thus :—

Edmund Burke to Sir Gilbert Elliot.

'October 29, 1790.

'My dear Friend,—I have ordered a book written with a good intention to be sent to you. If I could have had your assistance as I went on, it would have been more worthy of your acceptance, as well as more useful to those for whom it is intended.'

The ultimate result of the pamphlet was a revolution in the political party to which the writer belonged; some of its immediate effects on public opinion are thus described by Mr. Elliot of Wells :—

'November 26, 1790.

'The effect of Burke's pamphlet on the opinions of the public is already very perceptible. It is reported that two of the toasts drunk at the last meeting of the Revolution Club were, "*May the Parliament of Great*

Britain become a National Assembly," and, "*When Mr. Burke shall be arraigned for a libel on the rights of man, may his trial be as long as Mr. Hastings*'." Upon which Lord John Russell, who was there, cut his name out of the book of the society. I am told that Lord Stanhope has also withdrawn himself, but I scarcely give credit to either of these stories.'

The new Parliament met in November, and immediately afterwards Mr. Burke wrote to inform his friend of the circumstances which had occasioned the election of a Speaker to pass over without any 'protest, reserving our disposition to present another upon a future occasion—a disposition, and indeed resolution, which has not passed out of the minds of any one of your friends. The Duke of Portland desired Mr. Fox to lay in that claim, and to give his reasons why it was not asserted to the House. He went down for that purpose, but the affair was over before he arrived.' Burke goes on—

'Your two letters were the result of that partiality to a friend which is the only thing that impairs and limits your sound judgment. I have indeed occasion for great partiality on the part of my friends, and of great indulgence on the part of the public. I have faults and defects enough to call for both, as a man, a citizen, a speaker, and a writer. I have experienced a great deal of both on the present occasion, perhaps the most critical, certainly not the least critical, amongst the conjunctions of my whole life. The public has been so favourable that the demand for this piece has been

without example; and they are now in the sale of the twelfth thousand of their copies. I know very well how little elated I ought to be with this, perhaps, momentary opinion, which time and reflection may change, and which better information from those who are preparing to give it may dissipate. In truth, everything rather disposes me to melancholy than to elevation. It is comfort, and not joy, that I feel. It is indeed very necessary to me to have some, and that not a little, support, when a man like Fox declares his entire disapprobation of the work in the most unqualified terms, and thinks, besides, that in point of composition it is the worst I have ever published. When Fox disapproves, and Sheridan is to write against me, do not I want considerable countenance? I assure you that I have it, and I have received from the Duke of Portland, Lord Fitzwilliam, the Duke of Devonshire, Lord John Cavendish, Montagu, and a long *et cetera* of the old stamina of the Whigs, a most full approbation of the principles of that work, and a kind indulgence to its execution. I think it is only one conciliabulum that disseminates agitations and discontents, hitherto without much success. I was astonished at the newspaper you sent me, that about a book published only the 1st November there should be an attack and so able a defence on the 11th in Edinburgh! Who is there besides yourself that could support me in a manner so very flattering to me? I hope I have been pretty consistent with myself in that piece. Perhaps if the writer who condescends (and

with a signature so soothing to my ears) to defend me would look over some of my most public declarations, he will see how consistent I have been with myself. When I stood candidate for Bristol on a Whig interest, and on that only (not having had one single Tory vote, nor being in the least expectation of it), that the Whigs might know on what grounds of Whiggism I offered myself to their choice, I made a *volunteer* declaration of my principles, which was printed the very day on which I uttered it from the hustings. It found its way into all the newspapers, and I daresay will be found in the periodical publications of the time. There was not a protest against it on the part of those true patriots, and sound because moderate Whigs of that time. We have had truer Whigs and more enlightened patriots amongst us since the lanterns of Paris have made their light shine before men. But my consistency or inconsistency is a matter of small moment. If I had all my life been of a quite different opinion from my present (I don't know that I have, since I have been of discretion to ask myself what the state meant), what has happened in France would have perfectly cured me of the distemper of my erroneous metaphysics. Indeed, indeed, the entire destruction (for it is no less) of all the gentlemen of a great country, the utter ruin of their property, and the servitude of their persons, can never be otherwise than most affecting to my mind; and I never can approve any principles or any practices which lead to such a conclusion. Every day and every transaction in that miserable country furnishes me with

new grounds of satisfaction for the early and marked declaration which I made against those illusions and modes of proceeding which are held out to our imitation. . . . Most affectionately yours ever,

'EDM. BURKE.

'Duke Street, St. James': November 29, 1790.'

Sir Gilbert Elliot to Lady Elliot.

'Edinburgh: December 4, 1790.

'I am most sincerely sorry for what Burke tells me of Fox's opinion about his book. It looks like adhering to Sheridan against Burke, and if so, is a miserable choice. I hear that there were great civilities between Pitt and Fox on the first debate in the House, and that Pitt moved the call of the House, and was seconded by Fox; but that Fox is prepared, nevertheless, for a violent attack on the Convention.[1] There is a talk of an equal land-tax of 6*d.* in the pound. This is a strong measure, and is likely to give great discontent to the landed interest. An equal land-tax means a tax according to the real present value of land, instead of the old settled valuation according to which the land-tax is now collected. This leads to an actual survey and estimate of property, which is always an odious measure, and it shakes the security on which land has been bought, and long possessed, as the present rate of the land-tax has been considered as a settled rule by which every man knows what proportion he should pay.

[1] With Spain.

But the new method will materially alter the value of property. I do not know, however, that the thing would be wrong, not having even considered the subject. But I think it likely to give offence.'

Sir Gilbert Elliot to Mr. Elliot of Wells.

'Edinburgh: December 5, 1790.

'My dear Elliot,—I have come here for a few days on business. . . . I have letters from Lord Malmesbury and Burke, with many apologies for Fox's having been unintentionally too late to say anything about me at the choice of Speaker. Fox's intention to do so, and his uneasiness on the subject, as well as Burke's kindness on the occasion, are all agreeable and soothing things. But, for my own part, I was by no means displeased at the matter having passed *sub silentio*. It would only have joined my name once more with an ineffectual wish or proposal of my friends; no difference is made in the business, either for the present or for future and contingent views, by the course which the thing happened to take, and, to tell you the truth, I have long ago dismissed this object from amongst the possibilities of our political prospects. My wishes, when I indulge myself in the region of dreams at all, are very much limited to possessing the means of pursuing the course of public life and public exertions which my principles approve, without ruin to my family.

'Burke tells me that Fox disapproves in the most unqualified manner his work on the French Revolution,

both as to matter and composition. As I differ so entirely with Fox on this subject, I cannot help apprehending that his opinion is influenced in some degree by a leaning towards Sheridan in his difference with Burke, and that his professing these opinions unreservedly is an indication of his intention to take part openly with Sheridan on this occasion. I need not say to you how miserable I should think such a choice between such men; but I regret the thing extremely also, because it threatens to embark Fox in a set of opinions, and in a course of politics, which will not do him credit, and in which it will be impossible for the truly respectable and weighty part of his support to follow him. I should regret it on account of its ill consequence to the reputation and views of Fox himself, of whom I think most highly, and for whom I feel a sincere attachment, both on public grounds and in gratitude for many marks of kindness and partiality for me. I regret it also on account of its ill effects on the public cause in which we are all embarked, and the disunion of the only body of men in the nation who ever profess any public good as the principle and basis of their association—I mean the Whigs, headed by the Duke of Portland. With the Duke of Portland in our cabinet, and Fox in the field, and with the hearty union of these chiefs, and a little troop of faithful soldiers round their standard, I think our party will ever be serviceable to our country, even out of power; and I am sure, for one, I should always feel both proud and well satisfied while I fought in such an army, even

without victory. But if that body is to break in pieces, I know of none other that I should choose to enlist with. Certainly not under Captain Sheridan, or Colonel Price, nor General Horne, nor yet Generalissimo Lansdowne; nor could I be reconciled to any corps emanating in any degree from them, even by seeing Fox at the head of it. I am really deeply affected with the general tone of dejection in which Burke writes, and at a time when he should be borne in triumph, with these same captains, colonels, generals, and generalissimo at his chariot-wheels. I hope you are now along with him, and that he is enjoying the comfort of your testimony and your society, which I am happy to know he ranks in the first class. He will have told you of his being sworn on the same book with *Impey* and Boswell.

'What I have said of Fox, Sheridan, and Burke is *for your own ear*. I should think it wrong to suggest the uncomfortable view I have been led, perhaps partly by the contagion of Burke's dejection, to entertain concerning these subjects, to indifferent persons, or to express any apprehension that is disadvantageous to Fox till it is more sure of being realised.'

A petition against Sir Gilbert's return for Helstone was moved in the new Parliament on December 16, 1790, and Lord Malmesbury, in anticipation of the event, begged him to go up to London before it took place, which Sir Gilbert accordingly did on December 13.

When within a few stages of his journey's end he

wrote to Lady Elliot, that, instead of pushing on to London that night, as he might easily have done, he should defer his arrival till next morning, for 'we have met so many discharged sailors and soldiers that I shall not trust my throat on Finchley Common in the dark.'

Sir Gilbert Elliot to Lady Elliot.

'House of Commons: Thursday, December 16, 1790.

'I have not been able to find time for a long letter, and am writing this line in expectation of our ballot beginning every minute. . . . Our case is so *very strong* that I do not think it *possible* to beat us. However, the most certain thing in the world is that nothing is certain, at least in politics, and I am armed with philosophy and resignation against all events. We arrived yesterday at noon, having slept at Hatfield. I dined at Burlington House with Lord Malmesbury, Lord Titchfield, the Duchess, her daughter, and Harry Greville. I came to the House yesterday and saw Fox and everybody I wanted. I passed great part of the day with Burke. I breakfasted this morning with Douglas, and dine there to-day, but have not yet seen Lady Catherine. . . .'

'London: December 21, 1790.

'. . . I was at Sheen at Francis' on Sunday, and stayed all night; the party was Burke, Pelham, Windham, and Lord Palmerston. Burke stayed all night, and we returned together in the morning. There was a close division yesterday on the malt-tax, which is very un-

popular. In the meanwhile there was also yesterday a most snug and amicable meeting at the Speaker's of Pitt, Dundas, Fox, and Burke, on the impeachment.[1] Burke speaks of it as having been perfectly cordial, liberal, and satisfactory. But it is a great secret, so keep this to yourself. It related solely to the impeachment, but Pitt was unwilling to have it known, and it would be awkward if it should come round from Scotland, which Dundas would certainly know.'

'Thursday, December 23, 1790.

'We have succeeded in Helstone; it was determined in my favour to-day unanimously. This is a good job over. I have felt very confident all through the business, because I had good ground to be so; but I own I was not without anxiety this morning while the committee was enclosed. They were shut up for three hours, during the greater part of which time I was walking in the Court of Requests with Mr. Abbot, one of my less fortunate antagonists. The debate (on the impeachment) was again adjourned to this day, and, I imagine, will last till late in the morning. We shall carry the question for the continuation of the impeachment, and probably with a great majority. Pitt spoke yesterday very fairly, and has behaved handsomely on

[1] On Saturday, December 18, Sir Gilbert had written—'The debate of Tuesday was on the continuance of the impeachment; it was not concluded, and is adjourned to Wednesday. Pitt behaved well; *all* his lawyers, however, besides *Erskine*, are against us. . . . The Speaker made a long speech in defence of the privileges of the House on *our* side. But so very poor in the performance as to have distressed Pitt.'

the subject. What it will lead to I do not know, but a battle with the House of Lords and with the Chancellor seems now inevitable. The Chancellor, however, turns tail at last.'

Sir Gilbert went to Minto at Christmas, and brought Lady Elliot up to town with him in the following month (1791). As she remained there till they both returned to Scotland in May, no letters passed between them during the session of 1791; but while she was on a visit to her sister Lady Malmesbury, at Grove Place, he kept for her benefit a sort of diary, in the following fashion, of the dissipation in which he was engaged:[1]—

'Friday, March 18.

'I never was so mobbed or so stewed as last night at Lady Hardwicke's, which looked to me like the day of judgment, both from the *crowd* and the *resurrection* of some hundred *souls* whom I thought already in heaven long ago.'

'March 19.

'Dined yesterday at the "Star and Garter," and, by eating little and drinking *none*, I was good company all the time—I mean to myself. I left Fox and Grey at ten o'clock just beginning to talk thick. I came

[1] A note of Sir Gilbert's to Lady Malmesbury, written in April 1791, alludes to the recent death of Mirabeau. Some time before that event took place Mirabeau had caused his papers to be removed from France, and placed in the custody of Sir Gilbert Elliot. They were returned with unbroken seals by Sir Gilbert to Mirabeau's representatives.

straight home, and read a book about the Test Act till eleven, when I went to bed.'[1]

The only record of the political transactions of the session which has kept a place among Sir Gilbert's papers is a curious memorandum, drawn up by Mr. Burke, and containing the heads of an *intended* conversation to be held between the Duke of Portland and Mr. Fox. It would go far to prove, were proof needed, the utter impossibility of satisfying Burke except by adopting his opinions *in toto*, and also the fierce resent-

[1] The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland having resolved to transmit a petition to Parliament for the abolition of the Test Act, so far as it applied to the members of the Presbyterian Church, Sir Gilbert, at the instance of Dr. Somerville, undertook the management of the business in Parliament. In the narrative of this transaction given by Dr. Somerville he says: 'During the suspension of our business,' (it had been decided to postpone the presentation of the petition, lest it might be made a handle for defeating or retarding a bill for relieving the Roman Catholics from certain pains and disabilities which was still pending before the House of Commons), 'I had frequent interviews with Sir G. Elliot, and by his desire furnished him with all the approved publications on religious liberty, toleration, and tests, &c. The interviews and conversations I had with him gave me a new insight into his character, and heightened my esteem of his talents and virtues. Of his good taste, of his sagacity, of his comprehensive, penetrating understanding I had formed the highest opinion, but till now I did not know him to be capable of such intense application, such patient research, nor of being so feelingly interested in the success of a question which the generality of political men deemed of inferior concern.' Early in May Sir Gilbert presented the petition, and closed 'a speech replete with solid argument' by moving that the House should immediately resolve itself into a committee to consider how far the provisions of the Test Act extended, or ought to extend to persons born in Scotland. The motion was lost—62 voted for it, 120 against it. Mr. Burke not only took no part in this debate, but expressed 'marked disapprobation of our application to Parliament.'—*Dr. Somerville's Memoirs.*

ment with which he sought to detach the Duke from Fox.

The paper is written in the handwriting of Burke, but is docketed by Sir Gilbert, whose conduct on this occasion caused some coolness on the part of Burke.

'*Instructions* intended for the use of the Duke of Portland, in a conversation expected to take place between him and Mr. Fox. May 1791.

'Brought to me, I think, by Elliot of Wells, from Mr. Burke's, where it was drawn up, with the intention that I should deliver it, or carry the substance of it, to the Duke.'

'*Note.*—I declined doing so, not agreeing with Mr. Burke in the suspicions entertained of Mr. Fox, and disapproving of any measure that might lead to a rupture between the Duke and Fox on the subject of the French Revolution, or that should make the opinions entertained on that subject any criterion of political connection at home.'

'*Circumstances* to be observed in the conversation between and .

'This explanation, like most other measures, is liable to some dangers. It will be equally improper to acquiesce in what does not amount to a full and unequivocal satisfaction to the Duke's mind; or, on the other hand, to refuse acquiescence to that which is satisfactory; at the same time it is almost impossible to

determine what expressions or declaration of opinions do or do not give sufficient assurance of the line of conduct which the person speaking means to pursue. The necessity of requiring this explanation implies that there *has been* something in the conduct of Fox or his friends (or in the circumstance of the time, say), which *forms a presumption* against the person called on to explain; otherwise no explanation would be necessary. This being the case, the Duke is to take care that he does not receive that as a satisfactory explanation, which is compatible with the presumption which induces him to ask the explanation.

'If Fox means to persevere in propagating the principles of the French Revolution, his object would naturally be to set the Duke's mind as much as possible at ease with regard to his intentions, to lull him with a false security, and, in the meantime, to go on as usual.

'If this is really Fox's intention (requiring explanation, as I said, implies the possibility of it), it would be the easiest thing in the world for him to word his explanation in such a manner as that the Duke would appear excessively unreasonable in not being satisfied, and yet by no means to preclude him from afterwards taking what part he chose, without incurring the imputation of departing from his previous declarations. To do this would not require Fox's ingenuity.

'If the Duke contents himself with asking if he means to apply the principles of the French Revolution to England, and to acquiesce in the negative answer, the explanation will be wholly nugatory. The point to

be explained is not whether he means to introduce the French Revolution here, but why, if he does not, he extols and magnifies it in the language and sentiments of those who do; and how these two things are compatible. This is what wants explanation.

'The truth is, that no explanation can give satisfaction. The explanation is that of conduct and not of language. It is as impossible to ascertain what declarations imply future conduct, as it (is) easy to say from that conduct what the intentions are. On this principle all tests are absurd; you cannot fix on any form of words which will bind or determine political conduct.

'The only way, therefore, is to say that he shall judge by his future conduct what he means. But to say, Do you mean to apply these things here? is only to echo their own delusive plausibilities, and to say, Pray trifle with me.'

The following letter from Mr. Elliot of Wells, written immediately after Sir Gilbert's return to Minto, carries on the narrative of the party politics of the year, which were as disturbed and unsatisfactory as those of continental Europe.

'Bury Street: May 21, 1791.

'My dear Sir Gilbert,—I do most sincerely congratulate you on your arrival at Minto, and only wish I were now with you enjoying the tranquil scenes of Teviotside. The weather has been truly delightful ever since you left town, except the last two or three days, which have been rather windy and unpleasant.

'Burke's letter was published yesterday, and he has given me a copy of it to send to you. Though the breach between him and Fox seems perfectly beyond all possibility of cure, yet I am glad to observe that he appears to retain his attachment to most of his old *particular* friends, and it will perhaps be some satisfaction to you to know that he talks, and, I really believe, feels about you with as much earnestness and interest as ever. Windham still continues a great Foxite, but begins to be very much alarmed with the spirit of revolution which is spreading itself throughout the kingdom. There has been a Constitutional Society lately established at Norwich. There is also an association of the same sort at Manchester, which circulates Paine's pamphlet with unremitting industry. The circumstance, however, which has most excited the fears of people, is the late conduct of the Revolution or Constitutional Society in London, who have hired Ranelagh for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary of the French Confederation on the 14th of July. Their friends in France have also been so condescending as to send over a *flag* of the national colours of France blended with those of *England*, which was to have decorated this great festival, but as it was unfortunately composed of contraband materials it was seized, and is now at the custom-house. Sheridan's present intention is to attend this meeting, and it is probable he will not be dissuaded from it; for I understand he says if he should not go his absence may be imputed to timidity, and that if he is there he may possibly have it in his power to prevent mis-

chief. It is also imagined that the Russian war is likely to take place. It is reported that the King of Prussia has changed his ministers because he suspects them of being too much under the influence of our cabinet. However, the strongest symptom of war is that Rose yesterday gave directions to the clerks of the House of Commons to hurry all the private business as much as possible, and it is therefore expected that Parliament will rise much sooner than was supposed a week ago. I fear a Russian war is not likely to diminish the danger of intestine troubles; and I do think that if Fox does not remonstrate with his friends and endeavour to prevent them from attending the meeting on the 14th of July, his conduct will be very imprudent and impolitic with respect to himself, and very injurious to his party, and indeed to the country at large.—Believe me ever and ever, my dear Sir Gilbert, your most affectionate[1] 'W. E.'

[1] In a former letter Mr. Elliot mentioned the publication of the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, by Mr. Mackintosh, 'a pamphlet written in answer to Burke's Reflections;' but perhaps the following extract from the life of the Right Honourable Sir James Mackintosh, by his son, may be found more instructive than Mr. Elliot's comments on the pamphlet. Having been begun some time before, and its execution delayed,' it was published in the month of April 1791.' 'Events were in the meantime succeeding each other with such rapidity on the scene of action in Paris, that *if there was to be any relation between the arguments and the facts, as they existed at the moment of publication, there could be no longer delay.* It was accordingly finished in a great hurry, the first part having been, as was said, committed to the press before the second was written.'

CHAPTER X.

THE Elliots had left London in May. While there they had lived in Lord Malmesbury's house in Spring Gardens, and their departure drew from Lady Malmesbury an unusually *plaintive* strain :—

'Thank you for your letter from Stevenage. How could you be so long getting there? I need not tell you how uncomfortable I felt that morning, and all the preceding day; you saw it plain enough. Why, I know not, but I never felt so many black butterflies before my eyes before, and, were I as superstitious as I sometimes feel inclined to be, I should say I expected something worse in this absence than the former ones; perhaps because I had always *left you* and you never had *left me* before, for the *surviving* I have always held to be far worse, just as one pities the friends of those who die, and not the dead themselves. I hope, however, I shall, after *my own death*,[1] return to life with you, and that the garret will be once more occupied by its own inhabitants. In the meanwhile I refer you to Goldsmith's "Traveller" for sentiments better

[1] Allusion to her approaching departure for the Continent.

expressed than I could give them. I spent a melancholy morning.

'I go abroad August 1st, but shall come to London a few days before, for they say I must take leave of their Majesties. Lord Malmesbury has just told me an odd story which has happened in Ireland. An old gentleman married a young wife many years ago. She had a son, and, growing tired of her husband, poisoned him. The crime was proved upon her, but by *beauty* and other means she contrived to make her judges acquit her. A few days ago, her son returned from shooting, the gun went off accidentally and shot her. She lived only long enough to say it was just, for she was guilty of the father's murder. It is an odd instance of retributive justice.'

This was the first of a series of letters[1] which Lady Malmesbury wrote to her sister during the remainder of the year, and as no other letters of the same date have been deemed worthy of preservation, such parts of hers as treat of the topics of the day are now given. It is, however, impossible to eliminate the far larger portions which deal familiarly with the subjects nearest the heart of her who wrote and her who read them,

[1] Lady Malmesbury wrote to her sister every other day, and her letters, without any formal beginnings or endings, and always without signature, have the character of a journal. Her handwriting was remarkably good. She playfully said of it once that 'old Lady Spencer always said my hand was more expressive of *sense* than any she ever saw, and she knows Latin and Greek, and is a blue, so she ought to know.'

without losing much of the vivid picture they contain of two happy energetic natures, and it is no less impossible to do this without regret.

While searching their writings, we have grown into intimacy with themselves; they have passed from the world of shadows into corporeal substance; we have walked, talked, and eaten with them; and it becomes hard to part with their bright and gracious images, and to hand them down to posterity in a condition as impersonal as that of an old newspaper. If it is amusing to read Lady Malmesbury's lively chronicle of contemporaneous politics, it is no less interesting to make acquaintance with herself in the scattered notices of her pursuits and occupations, when the turn of a sentence, like the tone of a voice, tells more than many words of the character of the speaker. Both sisters loved information, whether gathered from books or men, and shrank from no subject because of its abstruseness, but we see that their learning sat lightly on them, when Lady Malmesbury tells us that she ran away in dismay from a lady who was 'very wise and very foolish—a composition known in France as a *précieuse*, and in England as a blue,'—while of her own erudition she playfully says, 'You can't conceive how blue I am—chemistry, physics in all its branches; to-day I begin geometry. I must be odious, like all people who have a smattering in everything and know nothing; but it diverts me very much. Adieu. I must go, for Mr. Ellis is to read me Newton's "Optics," while I net a purse.' Again—'I actually dream of

angles and triangles; I shall be the most disagreeable woman of your acquaintance by the time we meet. Indeed, I cannot speak to you unless you acknowledge that there is no such thing as water, and that what we call so is hydrogen and oxygen. Some time or other I will explain this to you, in the meantime make your mind easy, and take my word for it. Sublime as I am, I still condescend to work, and have finished Catherine's gown.'

Lady Elliot, in the meanwhile, was employed in teaching Latin to her boys. 'I can't tell you,' wrote her sister, 'how much Mr. Ellis admires you for this. I can't imagine how you do it, for I never could teach what I do understand, much less what I don't;'—and she goes on to say—'I wonder you don't take to chemistry, for you have a great talent for farming and physic, which are depending parts.' Whence it appears that Lady Elliot had proceeded to practical application of her theoretical knowledge, and the waste grounds reclaimed and farms improved by her at Minto testify to her success; while traditions exist of the potions of herbs distilled by her for the benefit of all and sundry in her neighbourhood, where her fame as a medicine-woman can be scarcely surpassed by that of her great-nephew's wife[1] among the Arabs of Egypt at the present day.

Nothing is more surprising than the detail in which the contributors to this correspondence, both ladies and gentlemen, relate their complaints, and the remedies

[1] The late Lady Duff-Gordon, authoress of *Letters from Egypt*.

prescribed for them. Farquhar, the fashionable doctor of the day, is constantly quoted, and he appears to have held a position among them analogous to that of a father confessor, with this difference, that their confidences were by no means made *à voix basse.* Among the sufferers, Hugh Elliot, as was to be expected, distanced all competitors in the originality of his disorders; for, by his own account, he was distressed for years by an internal python 'which gnawed his vitals, the like of which was never heard of in medicine before,' and for that reason, probably, he consulted *Cagliostro* rather than Farquhar on the subject. The medical treatment of the day was no less singular than the maladies, for Lady Malmesbury, we are told, at one time took twelve emetics in fourteen days, and was 'not much better in consequence;' the moral of which anecdote tends greatly to strengthen fatalistic views on the subject of medicine. Besides all these multifarious employments of learning, teaching, farming, physicking, they excelled in painting and needlework. The walls of Minto are to this day hung with Lady Elliot's pretty crayon drawings, and the sisters kept up a constant interchange of presents of painted fans and embroidered gowns. Lady Malmesbury always pressed her friends into her service, and George Ellis's designs for some tapestried chairs are highly praised. 'One is periwinkle and a yellow rose; the border yellow roses and periwinkles—*exquisite.* Another, crocuses and geraniums; border geranium-leaves—*divine.* I have done a scarlet lily FROM NATURE! and my judgment in

mixing scarlets and orange in the nasturtium is fully equal to Titian in his colouring.'

The superabundant spirits which they had inherited from their French ancestors[1] found vent in every kind of amusement that a summer's day could afford.

'You will never be more than fifteen,' wrote Lady Malmesbury to her sister, 'and can't understand my *black* moods;' but it must be confessed that at their *blackest* they had a certain grotesque touch about them, like drawings in pen and ink—not the less spirited because dingy of hue; at all events, merriment was the order of the day at Grove Place, when, in honour of Catherine's birthday, a dance took place which lasted 'ten hours.' 'She danced sixteen country-dances, and I six and a *Boulangère*, and she performed a cossaque, which was one of the finest pieces of dancing I ever saw.' The return of the eldest boy from Eton was, as usual, the signal for general rejoicing, though the first impression on the playmates whom he had outgrown was somewhat disappointing. 'James is grown much of a school-boy, full of cant phrases, and telling stories of broken windows and riots, till his little sister, overcome with alarm, slipped out of the room and was found crying on the stairs: "I'll never go to Eton—*no, never!*" And his own special companion, Catherine, stood aghast, in deep mortification exclaiming, "He'll never want me again."' A few days more, however, restored the old loves to their full rights, and

[1] The Amyands were of French extraction, and came to England with the Huguenot Exodus.

Lady Malmesbury describes a June evening, with the thermometer at 79° (she loved to enforce her boasts of fine weather with quotations from the thermometer), when the young ones, in restored harmony and good fellowship, went out to hunt for nightingales in a wood where hundreds were singing ('How are yours this year, my lady?'[1]); while she and Lord Malmesbury, and some 'pleasant men' of her own 'set' from town sat up half the night to talk over the news from France, and persuade themselves that they too were dancing on a volcano. 'Here we have George Ellis, who, by-the-by, calls country visits *Doll Davison*, alias *dull diversion*; the Dominie,[2] thin as Slender's shadow; St. Leger, the Colonel, handsome as ever, and Lord Malmesbury roars because I talk of Italy;' and well he might, for the life of which his wife was growing tired was a pleasant one, and as we get up from what may be called her journalised account of a summer at Grove Place, we feel as if a breath of summer were lingering in the air. The year and the people were equally in their prime—bright, gay, and genial; fruit and flower, happiness and hope, were side by side; and as for threatened calamities and public disorders, 'After all,' Lady Malmesbury said, 'one thing is certain, we shall make a good fight and drag Old England through at last.'[3]

A wilful woman, we are told, will have her way, and

[1] An unworthy taunt, for those minions of the moon never attain the hyperborean regions in which Lady Elliot lived.

[2] William Elliot of Wells, so nicknamed by Lady Malmesbury.

[3] The idyll would be incomplete without mention of the French cook, who did nothing but play on the flute and tame animals. 'He has a tame fawn, and an owl, and two pigeons who live on the fawn's back.

Lady Malmesbury was no exception to the rule. She had long keenly desired to effect a journey to Italy, and after a correspondence in the 'style of Junius,' as she expresses it, with some of her family who thought the step imprudent, she bore down all the difficulties thrown in her way by Jacobins abroad and relatives at home, and finally carried off Lord Malmesbury and Mr. Ellis as her companions.

'Grove Place: June 21, 1791.

'I am so excessively cross that I don't know what to do. Imagine that it is but too true that the Emperor is going to assist the French immediately,[1] and that the Prince de Condé is to have the command of the army, and in this case passing through France will be impossible, and I must, as usual, go through Germany. I am sure I am under a spell, for whatever place I set out from I can never go any other way. This is unfortunately such a well-authenticated piece of news that I have very little hopes remaining of its not being true, indeed none. They expect, in consequence, something horrible at Paris, and probably the King and Queen will be the victims; their heads will be off and there will be an end of the matter. But conceive that, in addition to going to Germany, I shall be obliged to go to

The pigeons walk into Lord Malmesbury's room, and over his table, while he is writing.'

[1] By the treaty of Mantua, concluded in May 1791, between the Emperor of Germany, the King of Sardinia, and the King of Spain, it was agreed that five armies should be marched by the allies to the frontiers of France, for the purpose of overawing the French people, and inducing them to return to their allegiance. The terms are said to have been drawn up by M. Calonne (late minister of Louis XVI.).

Ostend instead of Calais. In short, I am in despair. If Kitty[1] had not been going with me, I think I should have run all risks, and so Mr. Ellis had my epitaph; here it is:—

"Good Christians! with wailing and singing of psalms, bury
The lovely remains of poor dear Lady Malmesbury.
Because she refused in Old England to stop, alas!
She was killed, do you see, by a *parlez vous* populace."'

'July 19.

'Anthony St. Leger and Monsieur de Champçenay spent two nights here. The latter was governor of the Tuilleries, and got over three hours before the order came to stop everybody. They are committing more horrors than ever in France, and the gentlemen are obliged to fly in the smallest boats to get away, and are fired upon like wild beasts. I am afraid we have some wolfish blood in our veins.

'We have a whole colony of fugitive French to dinner to-day. You would be too happy here, for there are eight or ten French at Romsey—their situation is deplorable, it is impossible not to be kind to them. They consist of members of the Breton parliaments, and are extremely well-bred gentlemanlike people. I assure you you must take to studying French, as the whole island will be full of them soon. The emigration growing greater and greater every day. *Apropos*, Tom Pelham is decidedly going abroad with the Websters[2] the middle of this month.'

[1] Her niece, Miss Cornewall.

[2] Sir Godfrey Webster and Lady Webster, afterwards Lady Holland.

'Grove Place: Wednesday.

'We are all thinking of nothing but the King and Queen of France. You know they escaped, and that it was said they were retaken, but by a despatch from Brussels to the Office, received yesterday, it is said they are safely arrived at Langon or Langry, near Luxembourg, in the Emperor's dominions, and it is now supposed it was Monsieur and Madame who were stopped; if so, my friend Madame de Balbi was stopped with them. Lord Malmesbury had a long letter from Tom Pelham, who is at Paris, dated the day after they ran away, and he says nobody can tell how they escaped; that the people were not at all irritated against their guards or any person, that they walked about the château and gardens as pacifically as possible; and that by the evening you would not have supposed that any considerable event had taken place. The National Assembly deliberated with moderation, and all the decided democrats reunited upon this occasion to maintain peace and order. The account arrived from Brussels adds that the Prince de Condé was marching as fast as possible into France. This is all the *real* news, and all the newspaper intelligence premature and false. This effectually decides my going by Brussels; indeed I believe no foreigners would be admitted into France. The ports are, I believe, shut, and Tom Pelham says nobody is allowed from Paris. One can think and talk of nothing else.'

'Grove Place: Friday.

'Alas! the poor King and Queen were taken, and it is really fact that he would have escaped but he insisted upon a hot *fricassée* (nineteen miles from the frontier), and in getting out was known. He lost four hours on the road in eating and drinking, and the minute he was taken asked for his supper. She behaved with the greatest serenity and composure. Nobody thinks of anything else; and I believe it was the only possible means of interesting me for a crowned head.'

'August 1.

'This day fortnight we go to London, and a fortnight later shall set off. I have given up Spa, as it would make us very late, but we must stay a few days with the Princes at Coblentz. I think it will be a curious spectacle, and like the dinner of Kings in Candide. . . .'

'Grove Place: Monday, August 8.

'I think our journey seems as certain as it can be, though I shall never believe in it till we are absolutely gone. Lord Malmesbury returned from Brighthelmstone yesterday. The Prince was remarkably civil, and has behaved extremely well about the Duke of York's marriage. He has put in a saving clause for himself in case he chooses to marry, which he thinks probable if he sees his brother happy with his wife, and told the King that had he permitted him to go abroad at the time he asked leave to do so, he meant to have looked out for a Princess who would have suited him, as he

was too *domestic* to bear the thoughts of marrying a woman he did not like. He desired Lord Malmesbury to see the Duke of York, so he will give him rendezvous somewhere, and during that time I shall stay either at Spa or Coblentz. Anthony St. Leger is to go with us, and to bring back the result of the conferences. If it is likely to last long, I shall take a dose of Spa ; if not, I shall join the party of Princes at Coblentz. There I have promised to stop a little while, at all events, to see Madame de Balbi and Monsieur.[1]

'The news of the troops are now decidedly true, and Lord Palmerston says the National Assembly are in a bad way. I trust most of them will be hanged soon. The Empress wrote a note in her own hand to Woronzoff to desire he would send her the very best bust of Charles Fox, "puisque c'était par ses talens et son éloquence qu'il avait épargné une guerre sanglante aux deux nations qui les aurait également ruinées, et qu'elle le placerait dans sa galerie entre Cicéron et Démosthène." I suppose C. Fox is quite delighted.

'The Loughboroughs have been at Broadlands. He was on this circuit. She talked incessantly. It is no joke, but I never heard anybody talk so much ; and she told us an anecdote about Lord A—— that charmed me. You may recollect that when he was to dine there after his apostasy, she never took the least notice of him. The reason was this. As he said to everybody that the step he had taken was by Lord Loughborough's

[1] Monsieur, brother of Louis XVI., afterwards Louis XVIII.

advice, and that he would soon follow, she, without saying a word to Lord Loughborough, wrote Lord A—— a letter, saying, that as she knew Lord Loughborough was always unwilling to give up an old friend, she had taken upon herself to desire him never to come to the house again; and he had the assurance, after this message, to come and dine there. This, I think, completes his character.

'I shall take my leave at the drawing-room on the 21st, as there is only one a fortnight. Everybody going abroad. Lord Palmerston to Paris. Duchess of Cumberland and Lady Elizabeth to Spa. The Norths and L——s to Italy.'

'Broadlands: August 24.

'A pretty piece of work Mr. Pitt has made of this Russian war. I think all the *foxhounds* will have a fine chase at him next session. Such an infamous "*pray, pray* forgive me" thing as the paper signed by Fawkener and Whitworth is, that one is quite in a rage about it. The fleet is paying off. Lady Palmerston went there Saturday. Lord Palmerston is still at Paris; he says even Tom Pelham complains of the part of France he went through, and says it looks more like a *dissolution* than a *revolution*; and one ought to think about ten times as much as he says. They took a gentleman in his château near Lyons. The municipalities themselves *cut him to pieces alive* before his wife, and then roasted him to eat him. She brought the account and complaint herself before the National Assembly, who merely made it over to a *Comité de Recherches*. The Harry

Pelhams left Paris Thursday—he not at all well, I fear. 'Lord Palmerston describes the heat as intolerable; the thermometer sometimes at 89.'

'Spring Gardens: Wednesday.

'Yesterday I dined at Lady Payne's with Madame D'Albany, the Pretender's widow, a very pleasant woman indeed. Alfieri was there, whom she is supposed to be married to. We had some foreigners and Lord *Lorn*, who looks dying, but is only dying for love of Lady Mexborough. He is one of the young men who have cut their hair short in their necks behind. Harry Greville is married to Sir Bellingham Graham's sister, a pretty girl with 10,000*l.* I hope to be at Brussels Sunday or Monday.'

'Coblentz: September 20, 1791.

'We left Spa Friday morning, dined at Aix-la-Chapelle with Monsieur de la Vaupolière, and slept at Juliers. Saturday we got to Bonn, and Sunday here. Lord Malmesbury and St. Leger left us on Monday for Berlin, and here am I planted for a month. Nothing can be more uncomfortable, for although I am quite overpowered by kindness and civilities, wherever there are Princes there is a degree of gêne, and besides it is really like living in a camp, for none of the French wear anything but uniforms. They are lodged in a château, more *delabré* than anything you ever saw. Monsieur[1] has but two rooms for everything, Madame[2] two, and Monsieur

[1] Afterwards Louis XVIII.

[2] Princess of Savoy, married to Monsieur,

d'Artois[1] only one. One great room to sit, and eat, and live in! It really makes one's heart ache; there are certainly at least eight hundred Frenchmen here, principally of the first families, and all the persons who formed the gayest court of Europe four or five years ago.

'Coblentz: September 24, 1791.

'I am already very much tired of this place, for it is both melancholy and tiresome, and has not any of the conveniences of life. .

'Coblentz: October 7, 1791.

'. . . Lord Malmesbury must be here Thursday or Friday, and I trust we shall be off by the 18th or 19th. He gives a very comical account of the Duke of York's marriage, which took place Thursday the 29th, and that he (Lord Malmesbury) went with the maids of honour the preceding night to break all kinds of earthenware against the future Duchess's door, which they call a religious ceremony. Both he and Anthony St. Leger agree in saying that there never was heard, seen, or read of such a passion as the mutual one of the Duke and Duchess. My friend Prince William of Orange was to be married the 1st October. All this time that he lives amongst weddings, I am spending my days in a most funereal manner, for nothing can equal both the melancholy and dulness of this place. The people you like best you can only see by fits and starts, as they are bound to certain hours and duties, and live at a most dismal château three miles off. The country is a beauti-

[1] Afterwards Charles X.

ful unwholesome desert. The morning fogs as bad as in the city. . . . . This place is exactly like a magician's glass—you see every famous person pass before you. The Abbé Maury is expected every day. I have seen both the Gardes de Corps who were so dreadfully wounded at the Queen's door the 6th October. There are two or three pleasant men. One particularly, the Chevalier de Puységur, is one of the most comical entertaining creatures I ever saw; but they are all Cinderellas, and obliged to live by the clock. Your Soul [1] is as much bored as myself, and yesterday we went through a great dinner at the Elector's, which reminded me of my former greatness and misery.

'I am very sorry I am grown to love these Princes so well that their interest will go near my heart, which is very foolish; but I defy anybody to live constantly with them and not to love them, especially Monsieur, who is exactly and precisely like the bon Henri Quatre —he has the same kindness and *amabilité*. The Comte d'Artois has a more decided character, remarkably good and graceful manners; and they both bear their situation with a degree of cheerful philosophy not to be believed unless you see it, and indeed this is the case with all the nobility. The numbers increase enormously every day, and the discontent in France grows very general.

'Your Soul now thinks of nothing sublunary; the heavens engross his whole attention. He has got a

[1] Nickname for Mr. George Ellis.

fine telescope, which was very near being seized at Ostend, because they took it for something magical, I suppose; and he stares incessantly at Saturn and his rings, and tries to instil some astronomical knowledge into my head without the least success. I keep to my old friend the Great Bear, which Sir Gilbert taught me on our road from Russia; and I shall never learn any more, like the Americans who could not count beyond ten.'

'Mannheim: October 23, 1791.

'At length we left Coblentz, Friday morning, and really I had been so kindly treated there, and there were a few people I felt so interested for, that my last moments were melancholy enough. Monsieur has entirely won all our hearts, and our partenza was really so moving as to make us both weep, which you know I am not given to. There cannot be a more interesting situation than that of these Princes, and their conduct in it inspires one with the greatest interest and the strongest esteem. . . . We are now in the house of an old friend of Lord Malmesbury's, of the name of Kinckel.'

Naples was to be the goal of their wanderings, and a wet and stormy autumn decided them not to linger on the road. They passed into North Italy by the Brenner, and record a decided preference for the 'savage beauty' of the scenery in Tyrol over that of Savoy, meaning thereby the pass of Mont Cenis.

From Vicenza Lady Malmesbury wrote her 'first

letter from Italy,' which, on internal evidence, might have been supposed to have been composed in northern climes. 'It is wet and cold. Lord Malmesbury roars at the stone floors. Mr. Ellis sighs and laments over England all day long; he is as bad as a Swiss. I, who am very uncomfortable, only sigh for Naples. I rushed out to see a famous theatre by Palladio, and did not understand it.' At Venice they lingered some days, not so much for the sake of its 'magnificent Titians and Tintorets,' as because the washerwomen would not send home their linen. Altogether, in spite of much admiration of the palaces and of St. Mark's, their first impressions of Venice were more *matter of fact* than might have been expected from a party gifted with artistic tastes. 'We came here by water from Padua in seven hours. The boat, the canal, the flat shores, put one in mind of Amsterdam, though the elegance of the buildings is very different. The weather is damp and cold; it has poured for two months. A gondola is exactly like an earwig on its back. I like it, however, of all things, and they manage it with wonderful dexterity and grace. There are six *spectacles* open; we have been to three; one comic opera is very good. The Italian play, with harlequin and pantaloon, very burlesque and original, especially as they say whatever they choose. Lord Malmesbury and Mr. Ellis s'ennuyent à la mort; and in truth it is not gay, but we cannot go till we have clean linen!'

At Terni the cascade is dismissed with a word, but

the travellers dwell upon a cheering meeting with Lord Hervey, 'as pleasant as ever,' and with him they 'clubbed provisions and dined by the waterfall like Gil Blas and the player.'

At Loretto they paid their devotions to Our Lady of the finest petticoat in the world. And at Rome they determined to postpone all their devotions till their return in spring. The first sight of St. Peter's from a distance struck them as not so fine as St. Paul's from the Dover Road; but, on a nearer view, Lady Malmesbury wrote 'that it was the work of giants, and giants of exquisite taste. The Pantheon is less superhuman, but, as it has been pillaged to deck out the other, one feels a sort of tenderness for it as unjustly oppressed, and an indignation against its successful rival. The fountains are magnificent. *Au reste*, I have seen nothing of Rome, and indeed cannot during the two days we stay here. . . . Mr. Ellis complains and laments more than ever. *Entre nous*, I don't think our party is very gay, and I have now and then repented having, against wind and tide, undertaken this journey. However, it is as well to give one instance of resolution in one's life.'

Naples was reached early in December, and, to judge from the following letter, received them with as cloudy a countenance as Old England herself could have done.

'Naples: December 10, 1791.

'Here we are at last, in twenty-nine hours from Rome, without stopping, except to breakfast. . . . It

has been a horrid thick fog ever since we have been here, and to-day it is a complete rainy day. . . .'

'December 16.

The L——s are here. Travelling has made her more great and dictatorial than ever. Did I mention that she told Lady Camelford she could talk no Italian but poetry? Lady Camelford replied that she thought prose would be more useful. And the story of Prince Camille is excellent. I rather think this is the second time of telling, but it don't signify. You remember Prince Camille de Rohan, ambassador at Rome from Malta. A *chanoinesse*, his *bonne amie*, does the honours of his house. Mrs. L——, *par pruderie*, would not visit her (though she don't live in the same house), and, upon finding she was laughed at, how do you think she settled it? She sent a card to the *Prince and Princesse Camille*. This was told me under the seal of secrecy, so pray don't say a word about it to anybody. She won't go to Caserta to see Lady Hamilton, though every soul besides herself does. . . .

'Prince Augustus (the fifth) is here, and very well behaved and good-humoured indeed. The King has ordered him to live at Portici instead of Naples. He has had a complaint in his lungs for several years, lives entirely on potatoes and water, and yet is quite a colossus. I can't say our colony is brilliant. Lord and Lady Malden; Lord and Lady Plymouth; Lord Dalkeith, a natural, good-humoured boy; Lord Bruce, who is quite Lord Aylesbury just out of the shell—which,

by-the-by, is no bad comparison, for they are like unfledged turkeys—this is *à peu près tout;* two or three Frenchwomen. *Apropos* to Frenchwomen, I trust the St. Domingo business has cured Sir Gilbert of his passion for blacks,[1] especially as Mr. Wilberforce used to hold forth how much better the French negroes were used. *They sawed the Abbé d'Osmond alive between two planks;* and note, that he was just come from Europe, and never had anything to do with their management. I left Madame d'Osmond, his sister-in-law, at Rome, and he was at St. Domingo about her husband's business, who is, as well as a great number of others, totally ruined. The Democrats set this on foot, and the blacks were actually commanded by some of them. If anything happens to our island, I should certainly, if I was a planter, insist on Mr. Wilberforce being punished capitally.'

'Naples: December 27, 1791.

'I wish I could give you a good account of either myself or this climate, but we are both detestable. It has rained almost incessantly for ten days (I keep an account of the weather), and what rain! perfect buckets of water accompanied with violent thunder and lightning, and now and then stopped for a few hours by a cold north wind. Yesterday morning at Caserta it froze hard; from eleven it rained, pouring for twelve hours, and in the evening there was an interlude of such

[1] Sir Gilbert's deep interest in the slave-trade question is often alluded to by his correspondents. In one of her letters she bids him withdraw his thoughts from 'blacks, prisons, and workhouses.'

lightning as you never saw. The thermometer never stands for twenty-four hours at the same point—in short, as Mr. Ellis says, if it was not for the name of a fine climate, *one might as well walk afoot.* . . .

'We dined at Caserta yesterday with Sir William and Lady Hamilton. She really behaves as well as possible, and quite wonderfully considering her origin and education. The Queen[1] has received her very kindly as *Lady Hamilton*, though not as the English Minister's wife; and I believe all the English mean to be very civil to her, which is quite right.

'Did I tell you that all the Lazzaroni children are like Gilbert, and a great many of the women like your ladyship! I have lost all my respect for the genius of the old painters, which consisted in nothing but copying the models they had all day long before their eyes; for every creature you meet is a picturesque figure, and the women, in their blue and red cloth dresses and veils, all Virgin Marys. Mr. Ellis said publicly the other day, yours were the only beautiful black eyes he had ever seen. He sends his love to you, and says he is the most constant of mankind, which is not saying much.'

'Naples: January 3, 1792.

'I think your ladyship has been married fifteen years to-day. . . .

'Lord Malmesbury says this is the only very bad climate he ever met with, and certain it is that it is

[1] Caroline, daughter of Maria Theresa, and wife of Ferdinand IV.

far from a good one. When it is warm it rains, and when the sun shines there is a north-easterly wind. . . .

'I went through a dreadful operation yesterday—dining at Court. I was full dressed by half-past twelve, and from that time to five at Court. Then to visit the Grande Maîtresse, and the evening concluded with a fête at the Imperial Ambassador's. I was tired to death. The Queen has the best and pleasantest manners, and contrives to say everything that is obliging. She is particularly civil to the English. The dinner was given for Prince Augustus, and they asked only peers and peeresses, and their sons and daughters. This Mrs. L—— disliked very much, though she said she would rather be *at the head of her own order* than *the tail* of the nobility. . . .

'Lady Hamilton, who behaves incomparably, she sets her face against, and though she is obliged to see her, yet she endeavours to prevent countenancing her. Lady Carnegie is liked by everybody, and talks French tolerably, and Italian wonderfully. Conceive that I have as yet seen nothing at all. The weather has been so intolerable. Lord Dalkeith and Lord Malden have both been ill. The former has never been well since he chose to lie down and sleep on the hot lava upon Vesuvius. He is a very pleasant, comical young man. Poor Lord Bruce is a sad goose, but a good-humoured creature, and so desperately in love with the Duchess de Fleury it is quite melancholy. Lord Malmesbury says he is in love like a rabbit with a bunch of parsley. She is the prettiest creature that ever was seen. The

French Ambassador's house is a very pleasant one. Numbers of English arrive every day.'

'Naples: January 11, 1792.

'It rains and blows eternally, and does everything but freeze. One is under confinement absolutely; as Lord Dalkeith says, it is like being in Noah's ark when the flood was going off, for the tops of the mountains are alone to be seen. We had such a hurricane two nights ago of wind, hail, rain, thunder and lightning, as actually blew in one of Lady Plymouth's windows, shutters and all. All the English have been ill; Lady Carnegie among them.[1] She is pleasanter than ever, and reminds me often of Sir Gilbert in her quiet comical way and fun. Lord Malmesbury and Mr. Ellis are quite charmed with her. She draws delightfully from nature, and has done a trio of Kaunitz, *La Petite Veuve,* and her footman, which will enchant Sir Gilbert, who knows them.

[1] Daughter of Andrew Elliot, and first cousin of Sir Gilbert; married Sir David Carnegie, grandfather of the present Earl of Southesk. She lived to an advanced age (dying in 1860), and was remarkable through life for her powers of mind, her conversational gifts, the charm of her disposition, and, above all, for her deep and unaffected piety. Surrounded in middle life by a band of daughters gifted with many of her own best and distinguishing qualities, she and they kept up an unfailing intercourse with their Elliot cousins; and many letters of far later date bear testimony to bright and happy meetings at Minto, Kinnaird, Edinburgh, and London, where Jeffrey, Playfair, Lord Webb Seymour, Francis Horner, John Murray, the Clerks, and last, not least, Lord Lansdowne and Lord John Russell, were the habitual frequenters of a society which playfully termed itself the 'Brown-toast Club,' in allusion to the tea and toast distributed under the auspices of Lady Elliot and Lady Carnegie.

'You can't think what a pleasant young man Lord Dalkeith is, which you may tell the Duchess, as it is a pleasant thing to hear that one's son is liked and doing well; he is modest to a degree.

'The Websters are still at Nice, and Tom Pelham on his way home. I hope a few days in the House of Commons and the rival passion of politics may root out that other passion, though, to be sure, the remedy is almost as bad as the disease. I don't think she will like this winter as well as last, and she never will see such another, for there will be some other *morning star* in '93, and she will have then to be an evening one. . . . Don't you hate a bad mother a thousand times worse than any other kind of devil? Talking of devils puts me in mind of bats, and bats of all kinds of vermin. Figure to yourself that there is such a population here in that way that three scorpions have been killed in our room, and a *good few centipedes*, a kind of caterpillar*ish* beast which hurts very much. There is a family of lizards in Mr. Ellis's balcony, and he loves them of all things; one of them ran over my foot last night at Mrs. L——'s, and made me cut an *entrechât* higher than Vestris. Don't you abhor a lizard? I quite dread the summer, from the number of horrid animals, bats above all. What will always prevent me walking in the streets is the meeting dead people all uncovered (I don't mean naked) carrying along, and besides, murdered ones; for, so far from the stories being exaggerated, they are far short of the truth.

'The King of Naples actually loses 6,000 subjects

every year by assassination, and the wounded are not included. When it was represented that he ought to hang a few (for they are only sent to the galleys), he said "he should then only lose 12,000 instead, so it was not worth while." I have got a capital collection of real facts in this way, which will amuse you extremely, as they are more atrocious than any you have ever heard, and really facts. Imagine, that eighteen murderers lived in Sir William Hamilton's courtyard last spring till the King obtained his leave to take them up, and the battle between them and the sbirri in the yard lasted three hours, in Lady Hamilton's hearing, and they killed two before they could take the rest. Yet the Neapolitans are not so bad as the Romans, for they never forget or forgive, and will kill you twenty years after you have affronted them. Strangers are very safe, unless they are killed by mistake.

'You never saw anything so charming as Lady Hamilton's attitudes. The most graceful statues or pictures do not give you an idea of them. Her dancing the *Tarentella* is beautiful to a degree. It is not what the spider makes people dance without a master, but the dance of *Tarentum*, and the most lively thing possible.'

'Naples: February 14, 1792.

'The last three weeks have been delicious—perpetual sunshine—all the banks covered with violets, the wild sweet pea, the wild heliotrope, and all in full blossom. We have had the frigate's boat, and have been all round the coast and the Bay of Baiæ, landing now and

then to view the antiquities. We were five hours and a half on the sea, and it is the most charming inlet possible. Sir Gilbert would have enjoyed it of all things. I think I have now made pretty near all my excursions, and they are very interesting and entertaining, and the fineness of the weather embellishes everything. During the last three weeks we have not had a bad day.

'I long to have a thousand views, but drawings are so dear it is impossible to afford it. They make no scruple of asking you twenty-five or thirty guineas for a landscape in water-colours. Everything here in the way of art is much dearer than in England, as there are very few good artists. Madame Le Brun, who is now the best painter, particularly in point of colouring, in Europe, is now at Rome, and is going to England, but her prices are greater than Sir Joshua's.'

'February 25.

'You are very civil to me, but give me very undeserved praise in saying I remember what I read. The only knowledge that remains with me is what I acquire through my eyes; and as I fortunately have seen a good deal, I can show off in *shallow water* very decently, but I soon sink, and get out of my depth. I think my journey to Italy has given me a very perfect idea of the excess to which dirt, disease, and deformity may reach, without causing death, or even disgust, to some millions of human creatures. As Mrs. L—— says that nobody knows anything about Italy without having spent two years here, I say nobody

knows what a stink is without having been at Naples. I declare I begin to think Nero's wish not quite so atrocious. . . . I wish the Dominie[1] had been here this winter, and had escaped what General O'Hara calls that d——d thing, a fine frosty morning. How you would delight in General O'Hara! He is the most agreeable, comical creature in the world; he is quite *no cary*, laughing at everybody to their faces, but in such a way it is impossible to take it ill; and having been everywhere in Europe, Africa, and America, he goes with us to Rome, to my great joy. He is not a young beau, as he is certainly past fifty. He says Mrs. L—— talks like a running bass in music, and makes us laugh all day. Our beautiful Aquilon (so much cleaner than anything on shore) leaves us to-day, and takes away a beautiful feature from my prospect. Captain Stopford, who commands her, is a remarkably gentlemanlike man, and very much in Lady Courtown's style. He is extremely fond of the Admiral, and was on board his ship three years.'

'March 3.

'Vesuvius is charming, for, after my having given up all hopes of an eruption, on Monday he took it into his head to begin to burn. The explosion of red-hot stones that night was beautiful, and the next morning the lava began to run almost from the crater, and continues doing so, and we rather hope increases. The stream is narrow, but directly opposite our windows.

[1] A nickname for Mr. Elliot of Wells.

I went up one morning within about quarter of a mile of it, and the effect was very fine even by daylight, as the fire appeared red, and the noise was magnificently awful, like heavy artillery. The night before last we took Mr. Ellis's fine telescope to a house at the foot of the mountain, and could distinctly see every stone, and the beautiful cascade of lava. It is a beautiful sight, and the reflection in the sea adds very much to it. It is certainly but a small eruption; and, as Mrs. L—— has seen one rather larger this year, she is *great* on the subject, assuring you this is nothing, *informing* you what will be its progress, and saying *she feels as if she was doing the honours of the mountain.*'

'Rome: April 1, 1792.

. . . 'The weather here is amazingly hot, quite as much so as July in England; but to-day the sirocco is excessive.

'I went to-day to St. Peter's in Montorio, to see the famous Transfiguration of Raphael, of which you have seen copies and engravings without end. It is certainly a very wonderful picture; but what one grows more and more to perceive every day, is how very little notion of the original is given you by any copies, whether in painting or marble. What no one can conceive is the immensity of the ancient buildings, and they are by far the most interesting part of Rome. I go to school with Lady Carnegie, whose eagerness is most entertaining.

'The Princess de Carignan has taken me under her

protection, and I go with her to all the ceremonies. In general I think them very little worth seeing, especially to me, who am accustomed to those of the Greek Church. The benediction in front of St. Peter's is a fine *coup d'œil*, and the Pope is a remarkably handsome old man, and performs with the greatest dignity and grace.

'I have bought you some *seppia*, which is a renowned colour, much finer than bistre, and which stinks like poison, so that it is not a genteel but a useful paint. In general I have not been much tempted, so that I have no merit in not having bought anything but trifling presents. What is more surprising is that Lord Malmesbury has not literally laid out a single guinea. I think it was very ingenious in me to bring him to a country which furnishes nothing but the things he detests—antiquities, cameos, and intaglios. . . . In general, I think the collections of pictures, though immense, contain fewer beautiful ones than many in England. The thing that has pleased me most is the valley of Tivoli, and the cascatelle, which are divine. But the charming thing of all is the weather, which beggars all description, and its eternity is such a charm. Upon the whole, there is no comparison between Rome and Naples; and if I were to return to Italy I should never think of going to the latter. The people here are far superior in person and mind, and civil beyond measure to all classes of foreigners. The resources are endless after one has left school, and the villas are all charming—open to every-

body. We had a most beautiful firework from the Castel S. Angelo on Monday and Tuesday, which begins and ends by the famous girandola. Last Wednesday we had a magnificent supper in the Palazzo Colonna. It was served in a room 230 feet long, full of the richest treasures in painting and sculpture, and most splendidly illuminated. The immense crowd of servants, and the *tout ensemble*, was more princely than anything I ever saw. Adieu! Oh, how I wish I could send you some bottles of sunshine!'

'Florence: April 23 and 30.

'We came by vetturino in six days by the Perugian road, through a most beautiful country. Mountains backing the hills, and every bit of ground undulated. All the fields full of corn in ear, or lupins in flower, or of flax, and fifty sorts of clover, vetches, &c.; all shaded by trees formed into a basket-shape by vines trained up and falling over them in the most graceful way, among those beds of iris of which the Florence orris is made. The news of the King of Sweden's assassination met us here. It is a horrid story, and shows how these dreadful people have sown the seeds of discord everywhere. They say too that the King of Portugal is mad. At this rate there will very soon be no more kings and queens *in the pack*, nothing left but knaves, &c. I have already seen the Venus of Medicis; she is a lovely creature indeed. If she stood upright she would be exactly my height, so never call me *short* again, as she is the model of perfection. I have seen

part of the gallery. Titian's Venus disappoints me much. The environs are most lovely—such a valley! enclosed by beautiful mountains covered with villas; and when the sun sets quite purple. This said sun nobody has an idea of who has never crossed the Alps, for our idea of a beautiful setting sun is red, whereas this is a mixture of purple, and red, and mistiness, that is quite ethereal and divine, and like the raiment of Apollo. We live here very much with the Princess de Carignan, her uncle Prince Camille de Rohan, Madame Lebrun, who is agreeable, and a wonderful artist, and the Camelfords, who go to-morrow. Lord Hervey is a pleasant man, odd, but civil and gentlemanlike, and keeps an excellent house. None of our Roman friends are arrived yet. We are pretty tolerably lodged, and have excellent English dinners, and capital bread for the first time these many months.'

'Milan: May 11.

'Italy ends at the Apennines, and not at the Alps as people suppose. Tuscany contains all the merits, the beauties, the charms of Italy, and leaves all its faults for Naples and Lombardy. Here we are starving over a fire—Holland over one's head, and London under one's feet. I am sure Tuscany is the true original paradise—shut in within its mountains; and I am very like Eve driven out of it, and Sir David is the angel with the flaming sword.[1]

[1] Lord Malmesbury having been recalled to England on private business, had left Lady Malmesbury at Florence to pursue her journey home in company with Sir David and Lady Carnegie.

'There was' the most delightful creature in the world, by name Fontana, at Florence, certainly the first genius now existing for natural and experimental philosophy, astronomy, etc. etc. I should have laid up a store of eternal entertainment if I had stayed with him a few weeks longer. Peter Beckford is a very obliging, agreeable man, and Lord Hervey was as kind and attentive as possible—and like all Herveys, when they choose to please, very pleasant.

'Some other men we have been seeing all the winter were at Florence likewise—a very good set of young men too, neither blackguards nor too good; and there was a snuggery and a sameness—every day like the other—no visiting and no fuss—oh, it was charming! and I shall never see it more. Rome and Florence were, in fact, all *Italy*—and the only places I wish to stay at.'

Though Lady Malmesbury did not reach England till the following August, we need not accompany her on her loitering tour through Switzerland in company with the Carnegies. They dined with M. Necker at Geneva, and were edified by the deference shown to him in his family; and especially by the contrast between the fondling manner in which Madame Necker sidled up to him, kissed his hand and humbly asked: 'Y a t-il des nouvelles?' and the stiff starched aspect and sepulchral tones with which he replied, without condescending on particulars, 'Oui—il y a des nouvelles.' They ascended the Montanvert, and were insulted as

aristocrates on the French frontier, to which they had approached as near as they could to inspect 'the maypoles with caps of liberty on them;' and in all points they followed the regular course of a tourist in 1793. The last letter from abroad contains the following passage:—

'Spa: August 26, 1792.

'You of course know La Fayette and thirteen more are taken as they were trying to escape to Holland, and thence to America; they are sent to the citadel at Antwerp to await further orders. Conceive the emigrants being mean enough to go in great numbers on purpose to insult and laugh at these fallen enemies. The whole nation is vile and horrid.'

APPENDIX.

I.[1]

In the Memoirs of Mirabeau ('Mémoires de Mirabeau, biographiques, littéraires, et politiques': Paris, 1834) a letter is given, written in February 1785 by Mirabeau, in London, to Madame de Nehra, who had returned to Paris, and there expected to be rejoined by him. In it he describes an outbreak of a putrid fever, which, for some twenty-four hours, caused a panic among the inhabitants of London:—'On a mis des gardes à l'hôpital, on a parlé de murer la salle, et de faire un cordon de troupes. Il n'en fallait pas tant pour consterner la ville, et surtout pour éveiller les brigands.' And concludes thus:—'J'ai eu, comme vous voyez, un prétexte pour vous suivre de bien près; mais outre que la peste n'est pas dans mon esprit le premier des dangers, à beaucoup près, comment déserter le pays sur lequel fond une calamité si terrible? Je sais que, n'étant ni homme public, ni Anglais, je pouvais me dispenser de regarder la Grande Brétagne comme mon poste, quoique le sort m'y fit rencontrer dans un tel moment. Mais j'ai bien peur que ce ne soit là une évasion plutôt qu'une raison. Je ne suis pas Anglais, mais je suis homme, et quiconque ne perd

[1] This Appendix refers to a letter from Sir Gilbert to Lady Elliot, of November 19, 1783.

pas la tête est homme public au jour des fléaux. D'ailleurs Elliot est si bien mon frère, je lui dois un dévouement si entier et si tendre, et il se serait trouvé dans un embarras si terrible seul d'homme dans sa famille, surchargé de femmes et d'enfants, que je n'aurais pas eu le courage de l'abandonner.'

The circumstances which called forth these chivalrous sentiments are not mentioned in any portion of the manuscript letters, and the only allusion to them which we have been able to discover is in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' for 1785, where the following passage occurs:—'The metropolis having been disturbed with a report of the plague having been in the Lock Hospital, owing to a putrid fever having seized some of the inhabitants, the following notice will serve to show the pains taken by the committee to undeceive the public,' etc. etc.—

'"*Lock Hospital, March* 4, 1785.—Whereas a report prevails that there is an infectious disease now raging in the hospital, this is to assure the public that every person in the hospital, both servants and *patients*, are in *perfect* health!"'

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